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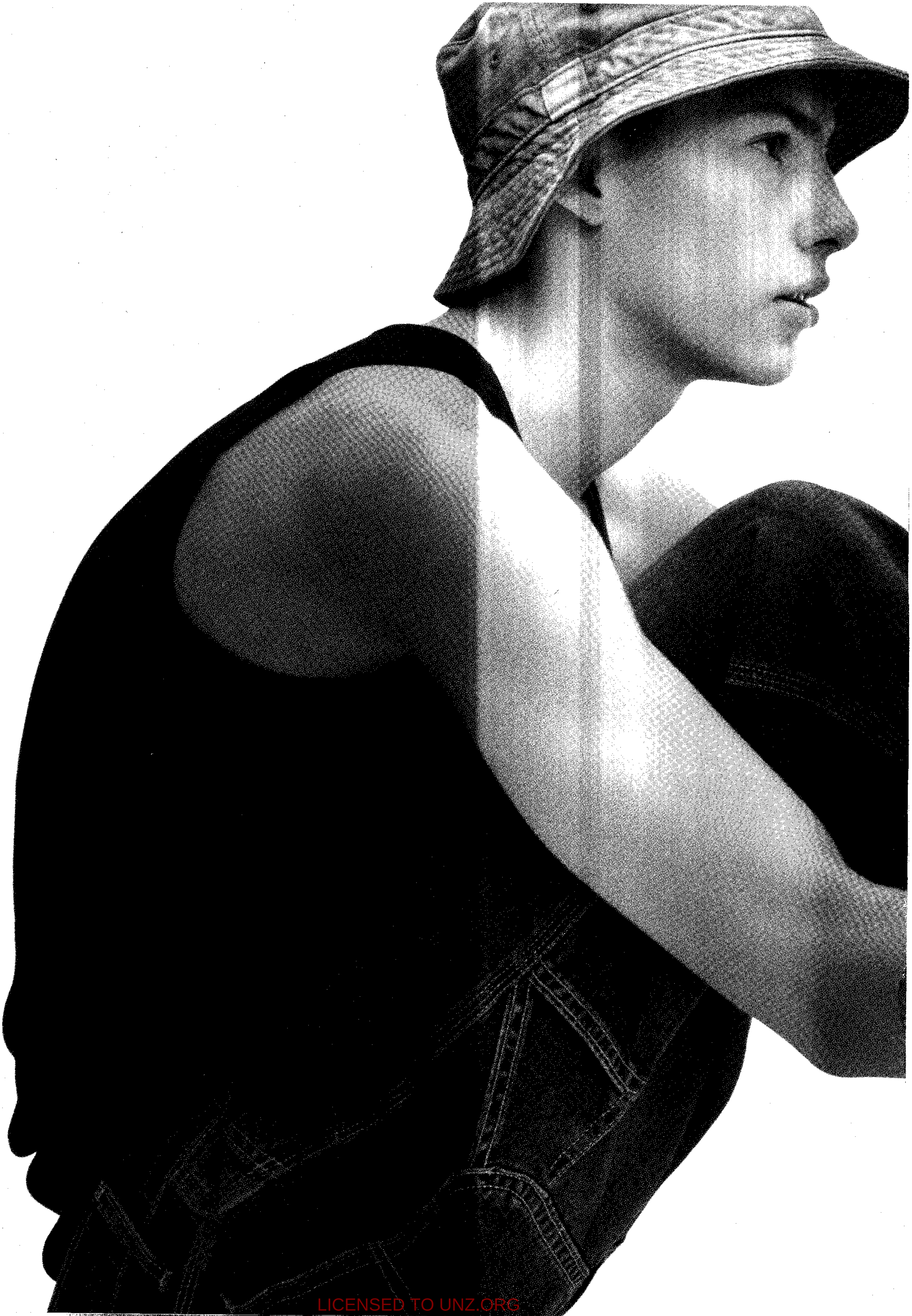

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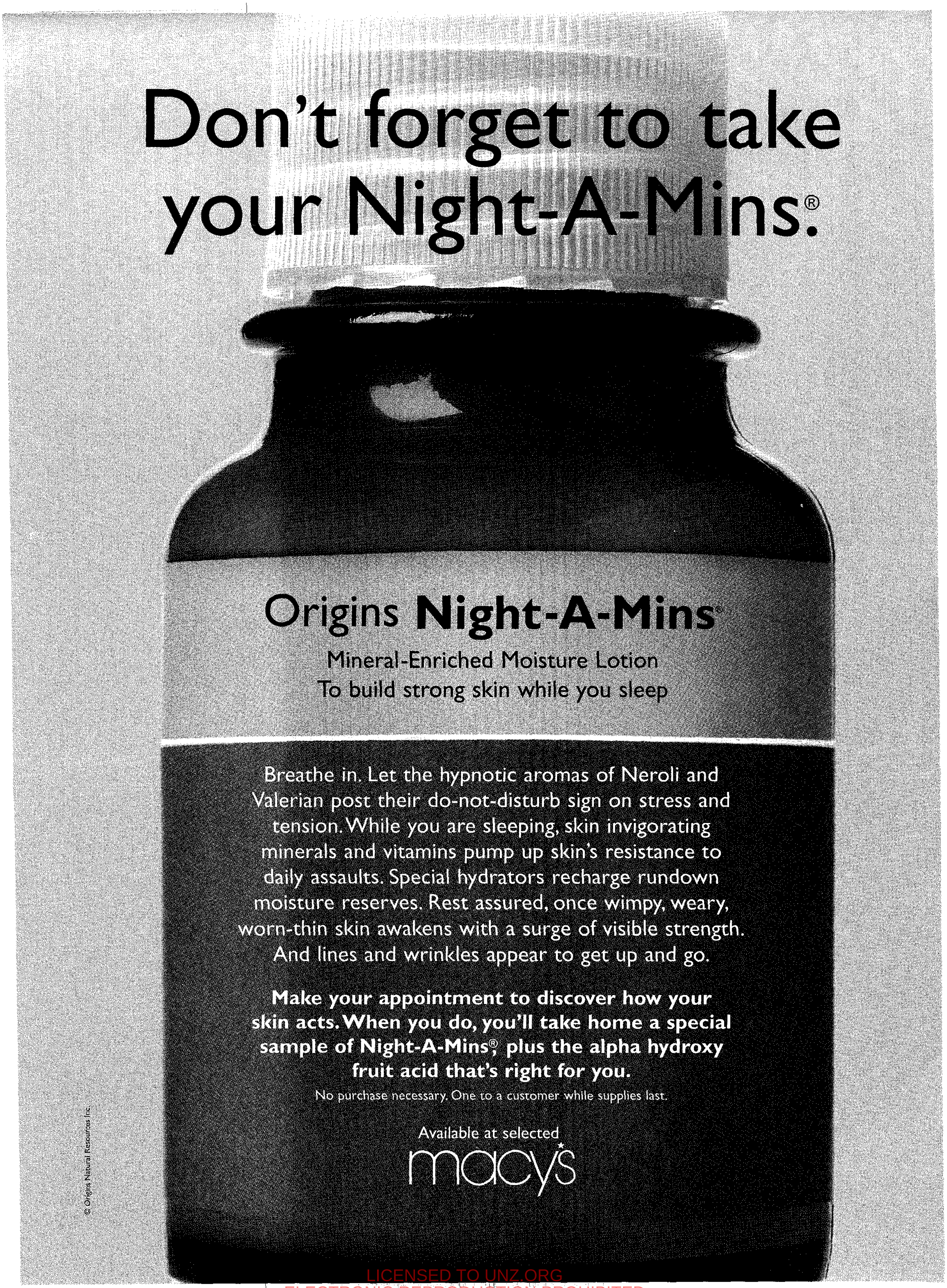

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No store has ever had a greater influence on how New Yorkers dress—and designers design—than Barneys in the eighties and early nineties. But then, as the Pressman family built its Madison Avenue fashion temple, creative chaos turned to fiscal chaos. In an exclusive excerpt from his new book, Levine charts how the Pressmans put black on the map—then drowned in a sea of red.

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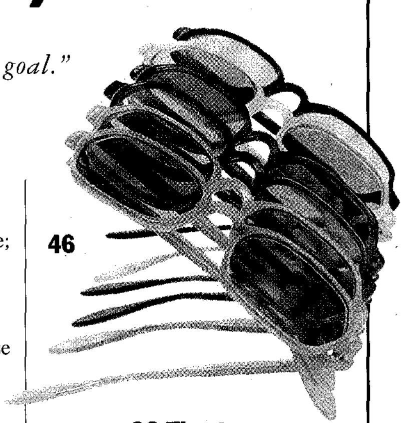

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MARCH 1, 1999—VOL. 32, NO. 8. Periodicals postage paid at New York, New York, and additional mailing offices. *New York* (ISSN #0028-7369) is published weekly (except for combined issues the last week of June and the first week of July and the last two weeks of December) by PRIMEDIA Magazine Corporation, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10022-6999. Editorial and business offices: 212-508-0700. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to *New York*, Box 54661, Boulder, Colorado 80322-4661. Subscription rates *in the U.S. and possessions: 50 issues, $42.* ***For subscription assistance, write Joseph Oliver, New York Magazine, Subscription Department, Box 54661, Boulder, Colorado 80322-4661. Or call (800) 678-0900 or (212) 447-4749.*** *Printed in the U.S.A.*

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Bad Neighbors?

Activists protesting Disneyfied museums and destroyed Edens share SoHo's pain; the fancy footwork in 'Fosse' pleases a crowd; Senator Sills?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COVERAGE OF the "new activists," who I daresay are mostly experienced old activists ["Manhattan: The Suburb," by Sasha Abramsky, February 1]. Somehow your piece neglected our Community Alliance struggle against the mutation of the American Museum of Natural History from a landmarked educational institution to a Disney-like mall that hawks "scientific" versions of Beanie Babies and nighttime galas of "Dining Under the Dinosaurs." Unlike the entrepreneurs of SoHo, AMNH suavely co-opted the entire political spectrum to architecturally gang-rape our Upper West Side historic district. While our community gasped from the sudden vacuum of political representation, the museum gang ravaged the gentle, landmarked Hayden Planetarium. Now passersby on West 81st Street can see their mutated offspring forming: a huge glass carbuncle growing out of the north side of the museum complex.

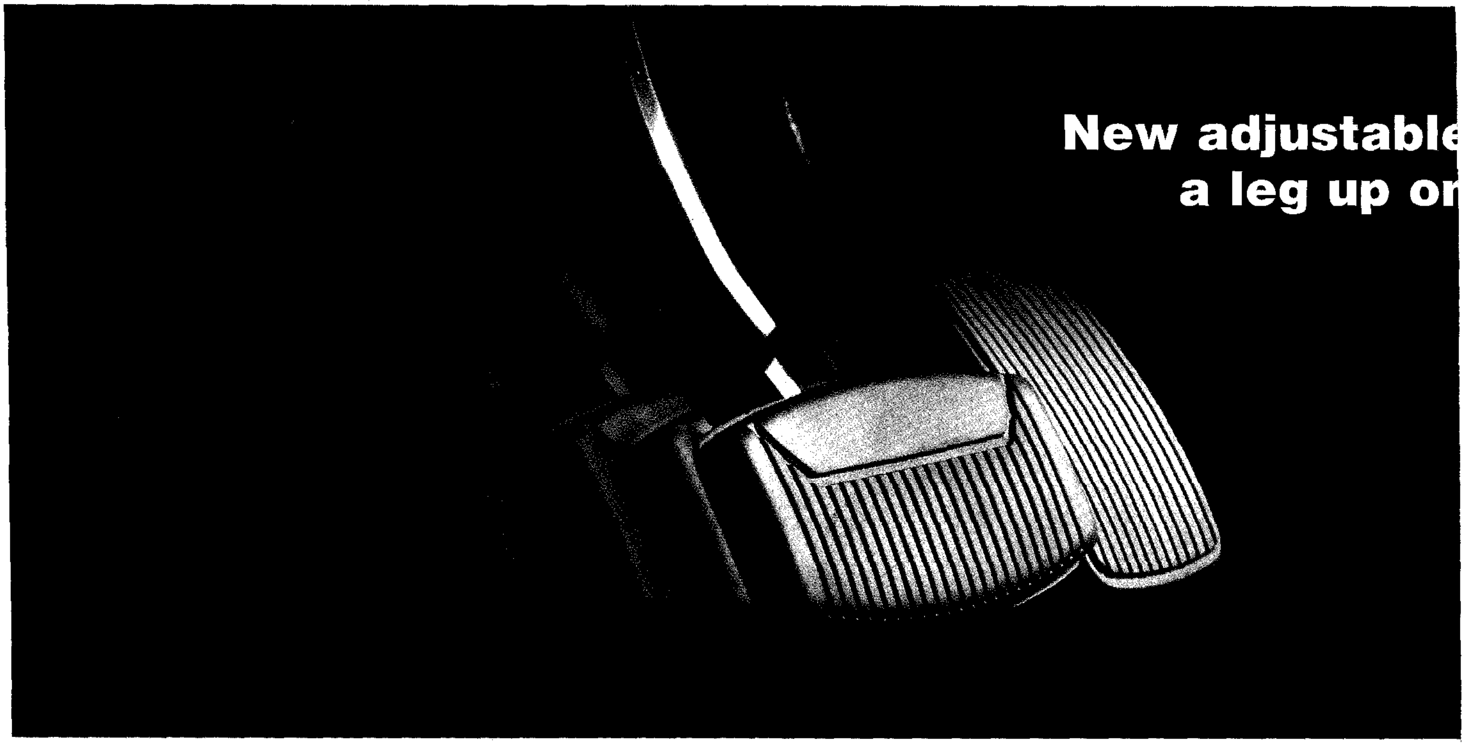
Samuel Leff
President, Community Alliance for Responsible Museum Development
MANHATTAN

Letters may be edited for space and clarity. They should be addressed to Letters to the Editor, New York *Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999, or sent via e-mail to NYLetters@aol.com. Please include a daytime phone number.*

THERE WAS ONCE A WONDERFUL PARK with low-rise stores and buildings on its borders. It was a private park, but beautiful to walk past, as I did each day on 78th Street between Lexington and Third. It was one of the few soft spots left on the Upper East Side. When the leases were up on the stores, the property went up for grabs. We did everything to fight for it—petitions, a lawyer, community-board meetings, possible landmark status. None of it worked. I watched the bulldozers arrive and uproot 70-year-old trees. The people in the neighboring buildings look into an empty pit. What happened here was really a criminal act—I can't walk past the block anymore.

Wendy Stuart Kaplan
MANHATTAN

WHY IS IT THAT PEOPLE WANT THE NEIGHborhood where they live to be residential-only, with businesses kept out? Well, businesses are a place where people make money, and homes are a place where they don't. Maybe Freud was right when he wrote that by their ac-



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tions, words, and thoughts, people show they regard money and feces as equivalent.

Jesse Bryant
MANHATTAN

A Different Dance

I ASK JOHN SIMON: DO YOU KNOW HOW TO have fun, fun, fun ["Theater: Faux Fosse, February 1]? After reading your review of *Fosse*, I have only one sentiment—pity. Either crawl out of your dark, angry, bitter hole before you go to the theater, or stay home and wallow in it. How dare you disparage a show that is clearly not claiming to do anything but entertain by celebrating a great choreographer. This is not Wagner.

Carter Field
MANHATTAN

IN 70 YEARS OF THEATERGOING, I HAVE never been so entertained as I was seeing *Fosse*. Does John Simon know about entertainment or only Biology 101: How to Dissect a Small Animal? A pity.

Bernard Margileth
PALM SPRINGS, CALIF.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT SHOW JOHN SIMON saw, but it wasn't *Fosse*. The Fosse I saw breathes fire with the unrelenting vigor and vibrancy of the cast. I left the theater feeling I was treated to a rare, uplifting music-and-dance experience. I work as a hotel concierge. People from all over the world depend on my recommendations. I haven't steered them wrong yet. Mr. Fosse is really proud, I'm sure.

Carlos León
Concierge, Renaissance New York
MANHATTAN

Another Nomination

MICHAEL TOMASKY IS RIGHT: NEW YORK'S just wild about Hillary ["It Takes a . . . Carpetbagger," January 25]. She's now the Beverly Sills of politics. Hey! If not Clinton, why not Sills for senator? Seriously. She's got the smarts, the charisma, the credentials, and she certainly knows where the money is buried. Name recognition is right up there with that lady in what is now the New Jersey Harbor, and it's all positive: Nobody doesn't like Beverly. Political experience? Please. The woman has run an *opera company*. The woman runs *Lincoln Center*. C'mon, New York—cast a diva!

Jack Frymire
BELLINGHAM, WASH.

Picky Eater

COBB SALAD IS ALSO ONE OF MY PET peeves ["Cue: Restaurants," by Gael Greene, February 8]. The rage that boils within me when a plate of huge chunks of lettuce, avocado, and even, in some places, *carrots*, is presented under the guise of a Cobb is uncontrollable. When I was a fledgling actress in Hollywood, I was introduced to the Brown Derby Restaurant, and the Cobb salad, by Willie Burns, George Burns's brother. Willie explained that the owner of the Brown Derby prepared a chopped salad of avocado, chicken, bacon, egg, blue cheese, tomato, and a smidgen of lettuce for his mother-in-law, Mary Cobb, who had very few teeth and found it difficult to chew salad. I will concur that in all of New York City, the Redeye Grill has the only authentic Cobb. But if you can get past the peas, the Saks Fifth Avenue tearoom finishes a close second.

Allison McKay
MANHATTAN

Correction In the February 15 edition of "Cue: The Mix," we mistakenly reported that *Conjunctions 31* includes an excerpt from Truman Capote's diaries. The piece is from his first novella. ▬

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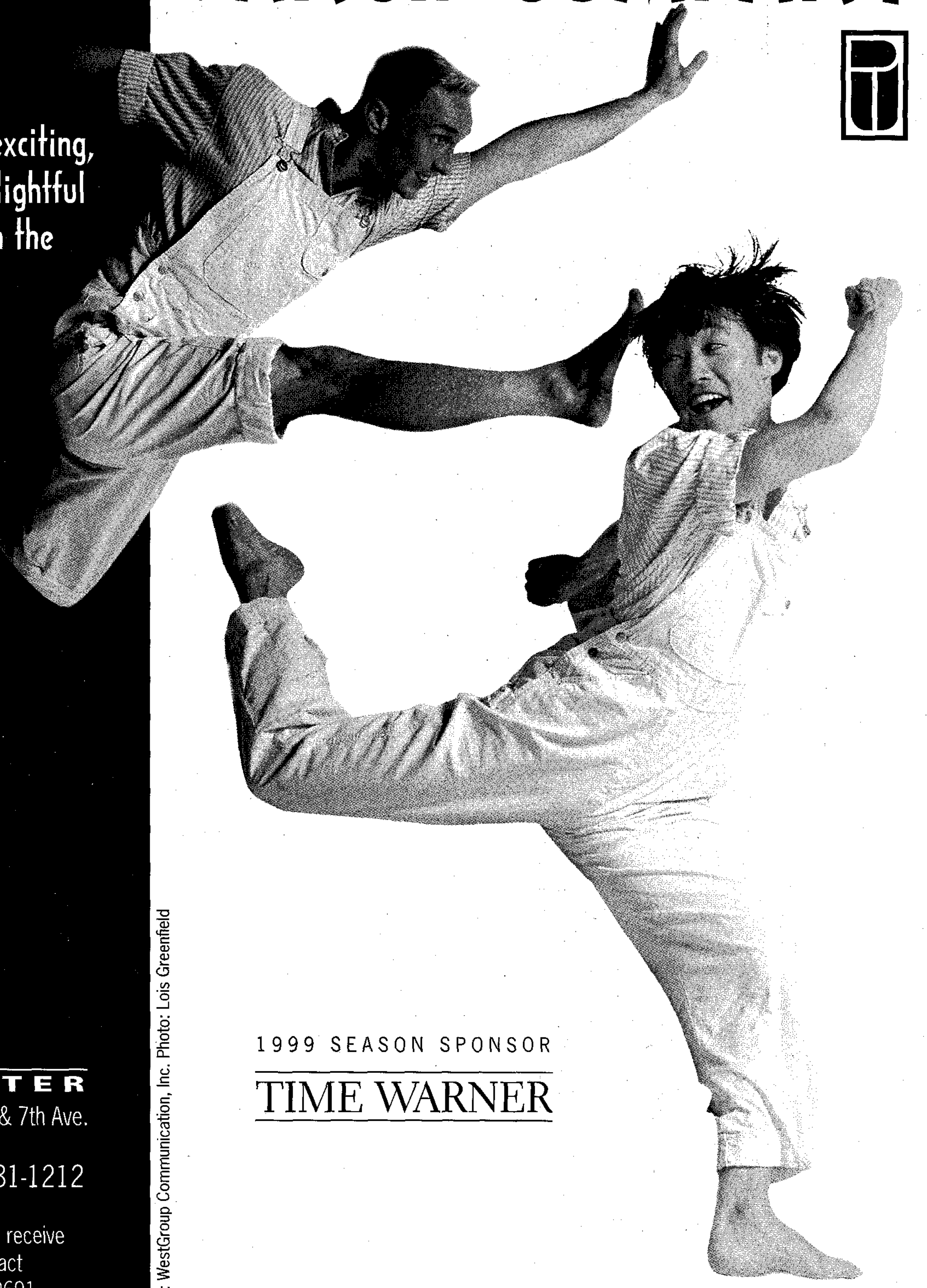

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BY BETH LANDMAN KEIL AND DEBORAH MITCHELL

INTELLIGENCER

JACKSON VISITS IN THE KNICK OF TIME

Maybe Knicks coach **Jeff Van Gundy** would just shrug off the fact that former Bulls coach **Phil** "Six Championships" **Jackson** (left) was spotted in Chelsea several times recently. But maybe Van Gundy doesn't know that Jackson's agent, **Todd Musburger**, was in town, too—at the same time. Musburger's son and assistant, **Brian**, says his dad was here for reasons having "nothing to do with basketball." Then what business brought him to New York? "Why would I want to discuss that?" asks the elder Musburger. The superagent claims it's not unusual for Jackson to be here, since he has a home "somewhere in New York State. He had a home in Montana as well as Chicago, when he was the coach there," adds Musburger. Now Jackson has homes in Montana and New York, and nothing in Chicago. Meanwhile, sports commentator **Brent Musburger**, Todd's brother, was on ESPN Radio's "SportsBeat" joking that Van Gundy might be ousted even before the male members of the Knicks City Dancers. So was there any Jackson-Knicks contact? "I suggest you talk to the Knicks," says Todd Musburger. "We were not aware that Phil Jackson was in New York," says a Knicks spokesperson. "We hope he had a good time and enjoyed the sights." After learning of the Knicks' denial, Musburger said, "Whatever the Knicks say is good enough for me. There are no conversations at present concerning Phil Jackson and his ascendancy to the head-coach position." Well, did Musburger perchance speak to the Knicks about their general manager Ernie Grunfeld, who's likely to catch the blame for what many consider the dubious Oakley-Camby trade? "I don't have to answer that," replies Musburger. "This is silliness."

ALICE MASON'S PHILADELPHIA STORY

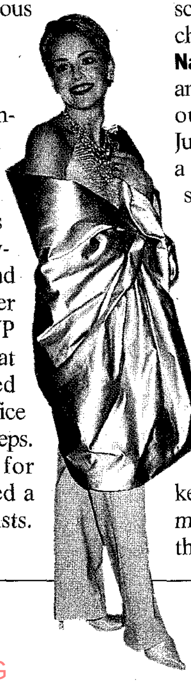
The surprising background of one of New York's most celebrated party-givers is revealed in **Lawrence Otis Graham**'s new book, *Our Kind of People: Inside America's Black Upper Class.* Graham reports that **Alice Mason**, the exclusive real-estate broker whose fund-raising helped put **Jimmy Carter** in the White House, was born into a prominent black family in Philadelphia. "Her father, Dr. Lawrence Christmas, was a successful dentist and one of the founders of the Philadelphia chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha, the oldest and most prestigious black college fraternity in the country," writes Graham. Mason has been at least as successful in the world of high-end Manhattan real estate, tossing famous black-tie dinner parties with the likes of **Barbara Walters**, **Dominick Dunne**, **Mike Wallace**, and **Woody Allen**. Although she's always been in touch with her sister, who lives on Manhattan's West Side, she hasn't kept up with her sister's daughter, Elektra Records president **Sylvia Rhone**. "I just met her about three weeks ago," says Mason. "I had actually seen her when she was 4 or 5 years old, and I haven't seen her since. But she's a great success, and I'm proud of her." The real-estate doyenne explains, "There are many people with family members who live on both sides. I've led this life for over 45 years, and it's all a state of mind."

THE MORTIMER'S SET GETS ITS FÊTE

Fête de Famille XIII—the benefit that has long opened the fall season but was canceled abruptly last October after the death of Mortimer's owner Glenn Bernbaum—has finally been rescheduled. Last week, the gala's chairs—**Bill Blass**, **Judy Peabody**, **Nancy Kissinger**, **Casey Ribicoff**, and **Herbert** and **Ann Siegel**—sent out "Save the date" cards for June 9. It'll be held, as usual, in a tent next to Bernbaum's now-shuttered restaurant. "Probably this is the last Fête de Famille in this location, but it is not by any means the finale," promises one of the organizers, who says the event has raised $6 million to $8 million so far. Bernbaum's lawyer, **Aaron Richard Golub**, says the restaurant will not reopen even for that night, "in keeping with the will. Arrangements are being made now to put the building up for sale."

AMFAR LEAVES NO STONE UNTURNED

Is **Sharon Stone** on slippery footing with AMFAR? She's been the organization's main celebrity fund-raiser for three years now, but some insiders are grumbling that after Stone travels to promote the AIDS foundation, some uncharitably large hotel and grooming bills get sent to the office. "She does bring in the money, but when you think of what she costs us . . ." says one insider. But isn't the foundation used to paying extravagant expenses after years of working with former spokesperson **Elizabeth Taylor**? "Elizabeth used to do the same thing," acknowledges another source inside AMFAR, "but at least Elizabeth at the end of the year would write a nice big check to AMFAR, which Sharon has never done." It did not go unnoticed that **Madonna** hosted AMFAR's most recent cocktail party in Manhattan. But Stone's spokesperson at PMK angrily denies the charges. "None of that is true," says the spokesperson, who insists that the star picks up her own travel expenses when she's on the road for the charity—and even does her own hair and makeup. AMFAR VP **Sally Morrison** agrees, explaining that some insiders might be confused about bills that are sent to the office but forwarded to Stone's business reps. "We've never bought a dress for Sharon Stone; we've never hired a hairdresser for her," Morrison insists.



Photographs: top, Jerry Wachter/Globe Photos; center, courtesy of Alice Mason; bottom, Robin Platzer.

VIRTUAL REALITY BITES FOR YANKEES

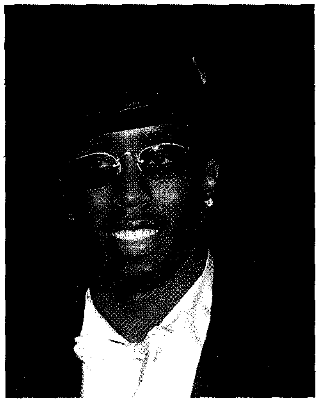
Even **George Steinbrenner** doesn't know where the Yankees will end up. But one place they won't be is on 42nd Street—not even in virtual reality. Broadway City, a family amusement center, is going up as part of the E-Walk complex at Eighth Avenue and 42nd Street, the idea being to recreate old-time New York through virtual-reality games and other interactive attractions. But they'll have to do it without the Bronx Bombers: The Yankees are the only city institution that's refused to come on board, according to a source with knowledge of the deal. The New York Public Library, City Hall, and even Coney Island's Cyclone will be depicted, but the Yankees, says a team spokesman, won't sign on because Broadway City's owners want to use their logo and likenesses of the players—without paying for them. "We just couldn't come to any sensible business understanding," explains the spokesman, adding that the team would be willing to consider a new proposal. With or without the Yankees, Broadway City's **Richard Simon** remains confident about the future of his arcade. Aside from a virtual roller coaster, schoolyard basketball, and an attraction "involving powerboats going through water," Simon intends to build a mini-stadium and hall of fame "reminiscent of New York baseball in general." Old-time baseball without the Yanks? Well, they could go all the way back to Boss Tweed's "Mutual of New York" club—the national champs of 1868.

BRUCE MAKES TRACKS IN SOHO

Bruce Springsteen is still a working-class family man at heart. Unlike celebrities who seek out trendy restaurants and nightspots, the Boss is more comfortable with the blue-collar set, and has become a regular at the SoHo jukebox bar Milady's, where Bud is considerably more popular than Chardonnay. **Frank Genovese**, the owner, is as casual as Springsteen when asked about his most famous patron. "He likes to come by in the early evening whenever he's in town," says Genovese. "He shoots pool, has a few drinks, and eats a bit with his father-in- law." And what's the reaction from the other barflies? Not much, apparently. "Bruce isn't hassled here," Genovese adds. "He likes it like that."

Bruce Springsteen: Bridge-and-tunnel guy

PUFFY'S PAD; A SELLING FAD



Sean "Puffy" Combs: His old house

MURRAY HILL COMBS-OVER: Sean "Puffy" Combs and model-girlfriend **Kim Porter** may have bought themselves a swank $10 million home on Park Avenue, but Puff Daddy's apparently not willing to give up the bachelor's life altogether. According to a source, not only hasn't he abandoned the modest Murray Hill apartment he was living in when his Bad Boy record label first signed with Arista, but he's actually sprucing up the place. Combs has covered everything inside the duplex in white, and he's even hiring a butler and maid, says the source. A room has been prepared for his sons, **Christian** and **Justin**, but whether Kim has any room reserved in Puffy's outpost is unknown. A Combs spokesperson maintains that Puff Daddy is still living on Park Avenue.

CIPRIANI BEARISH ON WALL STREET: Giuseppe Cipriani's buying frenzy seems to be shifting into reverse. He's selling off his operating interest in Cipriani Wall Street, the ballroom-and-restaurant combo. A source says Cipriani is dropping Wall Street to focus on the Rainbow Room as well as his new ballroom in the old Bowery Savings Bank building at 110 East 42nd Street. Cipriani's lease on the Rainbow Room went into effect in January, the month he completed the purchase of the 42nd Street spot. "I'm in a selling mode," he recently explained. . . . Meanwhile, on 56th Street, **Gary Robins** has been named executive chef at the Park. Robins worked most recently at the Tiffany Hotel in Miami, but he won acclaim here as the chef at Aja and Match Uptown.

JILL CLIMBS THE HILL: The New York *Times* is getting ready for life post-Monica. **Jill Abramson**, one of the ace reporters who's been on the story since the *Times* hired her away from the *Wall Street Journal* a year and a half ago, has just been promoted to deputy Washington-bureau chief. "With the impeachment behind us, there will be a great need to find ways to connect readers to D.C. events in a creative way," explains Washington-bureau chief **Mike Oreskes**, "and Jill is wonderful at doing that."

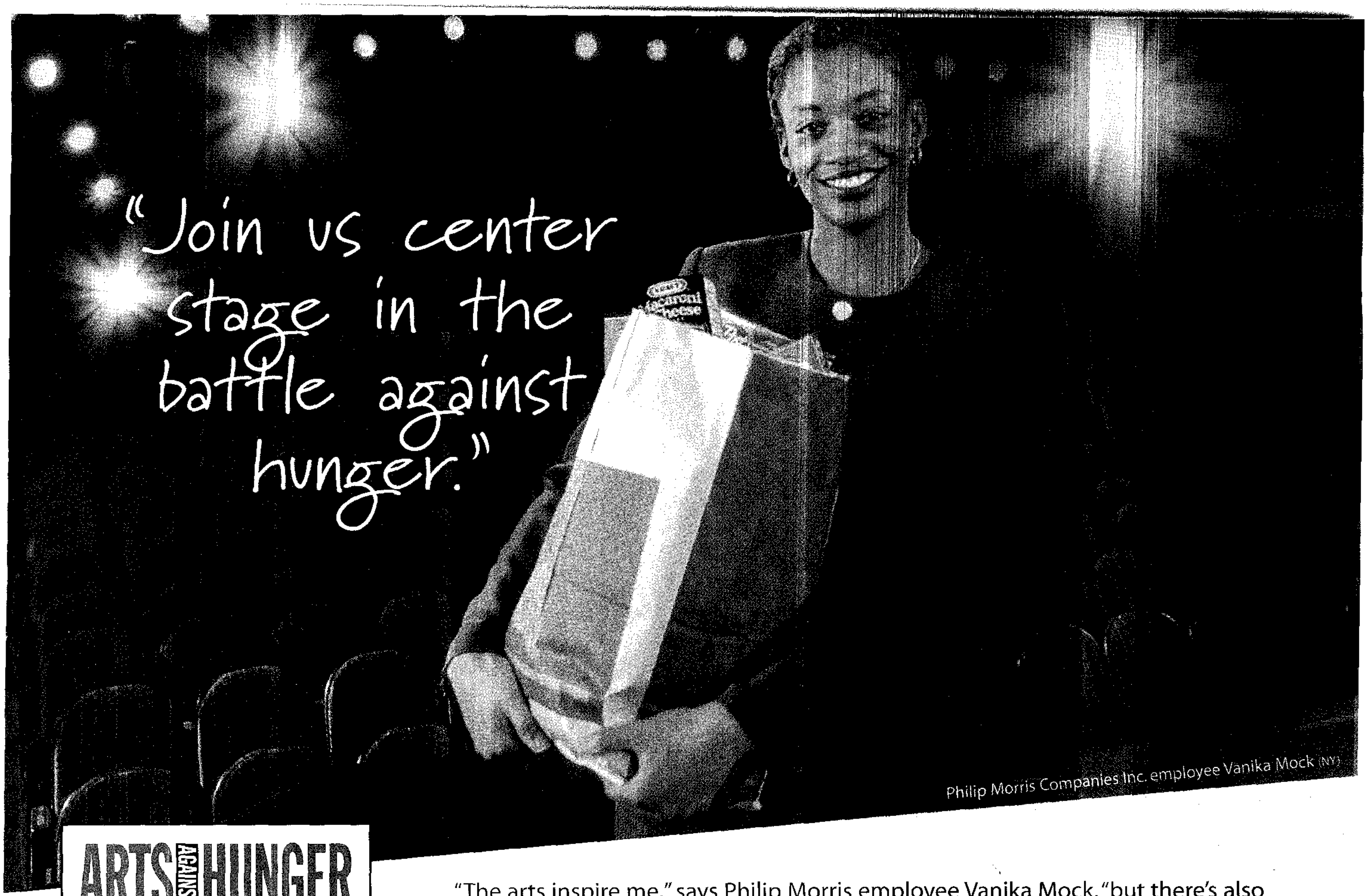
SCHINDLER'S LATEST LAUNCH: A new personality will be joining the Hamptons scene next season. *Hamptons* magazine publisher **Randy Schindler** and his girlfriend **Tisha Collette** are expecting a daughter—already named Chloe—in early June. Schindler has two children from two previous relationships, **Ursula**, 20, and **Alexander**, 5. So will Randy and Tisha, together a little over a year, be taking the plunge? "After our third child," jokes Schindler.

Additional reporting by Ian Spiegelman.

FRANKENTHALER'S BRUSH IN COURT

Helen Frankenthaler is known for her abstract landscapes—but when it comes to her real-estate deals, it's the literal details that attract attention. Six years ago, the artist made news when she had to forfeit a $250,000 deposit to financier **Bernard Selz** after backing out of a $2.5 million deal to buy his penthouse on Fifth Avenue, explaining that she'd decided to stay put in her East Side townhouse. Last May, she finally signed a contract to sell that townhouse for $1.6 million. But by the end of the year, she was in court over the deal. The buyers, **Mary Ryan** and **Bruce Lebowitz**, sued Frankenthaler, charging that she'd "unilaterally" scheduled a closing date of January 4; they asked the court to set a date "no earlier than May 1, 1999." They explained in court papers that they'd had trouble selling their condo and that Frankenthaler had promised "to work with" them on the closing date. But after the suit was filed, the parties negotiated an out-of-court settlement, agreeing to close by February 18. One of the lawyers involved last week confirmed that the closing had already taken place, "and it was uneventful."

Photographs: left, Robin Platzer; right, Alain Benainous/Gamma Liaison.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Macaroni & Cheese

Philip Morris Companies Inc. employee Vanika Mock (NY)

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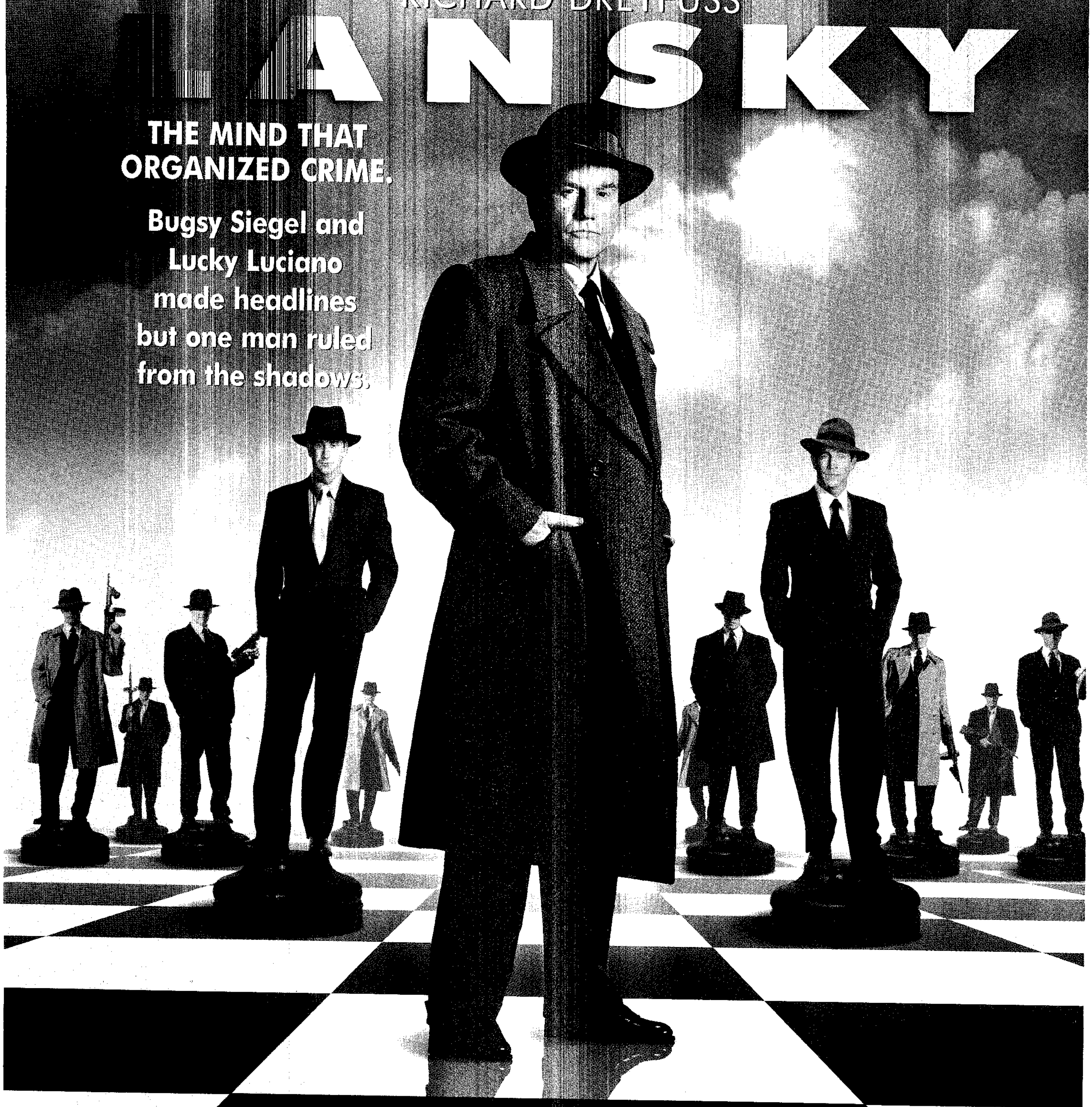
HBO PICTURES PRESENTS

RICHARD DREYFUSS

LANSKY


THE MIND THAT ORGANIZED CRIME.
Bugsy Siegel and Lucky Luciano made headlines but one man ruled from the shadows.

Written by DAVID MAMET Directed by JOHN McNAUGHTON

HBO PICTURES PRESENTS A FREDERICK ZOLLO PRODUCTION A JOHN McNAUGHTON FILM RICHARD DREYFUSS "LANSKY" ERIC ROBERTS ILLEANA DOUGLAS RYAN MERRIMAN WITH BEVERLY D'ANGELO AND ANTHONY LaPAGLIA MUSIC BY GEORGE S. CLINTON EDITOR ELENA MAGANINI PRODUCTION DESIGNER ED McAVOY DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY JOHN A. ALONZO A.S.C. PRODUCED BY FRED CARUSO EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS FREDERICK ZOLLO AND NICHOLAS PALEOLOGOS WRITTEN BY DAVID MAMET BASED IN PART ON THE BOOK "MEYER LANSKY: MOGUL OF THE MOB" BY URI DAN, DENNIS EISENBERG AND ELI LANDAU DIRECTED BY JOHN McNAUGHTON

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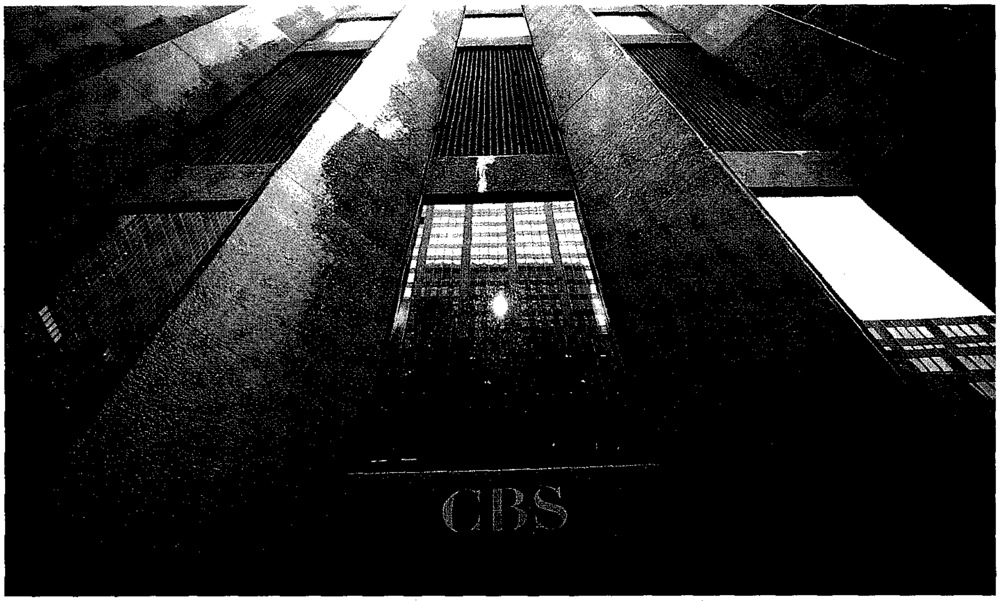
YOU'RE 24 INCHES AWAY FROM EVERYTHING—*DAVID WITT*

GOTHAM



Network News

Is CBS selling its headquarters and moving into a Trump tower?

VIEWED FROM ANYWHERE but directly across the street, the ridged façade of the CBS Building obscures its narrow windows, giving the impression of a giant slab of dark-gray granite. Nicknamed Black Rock, the landmark tower has stood at the corner of Sixth Avenue and 52nd Street for 35 years, a monument, of sorts, to the achievements of William S. Paley, who first assembled sixteen radio stations into the Columbia Broadcasting System and later commissioned the architect Eero Saarinen to design its forbidding headquarters.

But this month, Mel Karmazin, the company's newly appointed chairman and chief executive, took the first steps toward putting Black Rock on the block. Real-estate industry sources say the company has picked investment bank Lazard Frères & Co. to help explore a possible sale. (Over the past two years, Lazard has done a brisk business helping to sell nearby Manhattan trophy properties, including 712 Fifth Avenue, the GM Building, the Chrysler Building, and the three development sites now sprouting office towers near Times Square.) If sold today, Black Rock could fetch as much as $400 million, according to James Kuhn, president of Newmark & Co. Real Estate, who calls it "one of the ten best properties in New York." A CBS spokesman declined to comment.

Karmazin, the former head of the CBS radio division who officially took the company's helm this year, has boosted its stock price with a hard-nosed devotion to the bottom line. "Selling the building would unlock a lot of hidden value," said Victor Miller, analyst at investment bank Bear Stearns & Co. "Right now, Wall Street doesn't even put a price on Black Rock when evaluating the company."

This could be Karmazin's best moment to sell of the trophy tower. Commercial-property prices peaked last summer, before the global market turmoil spooked mortgage lenders. But "we are still pretty darn close to the peak for this cycle," says Steven Swerdlow, New York head of real-estate firm CB Richard Ellis. Besides, he says, there is always demand for a rarity like Black Rock.

CBS last year hired brokerage firm Cushman & Wakefield to help it find new space and was threatening to move its studios to New Jersey. Then last month, the network signed a deal for $10 million in tax subsidies from New York City to keep its home base here and maintain its payroll in town. So even if the network does sell Black Rock, it will likely remain as a tenant, though it's expected to cut its space from half of the building to a quarter, relocating displaced staff elsewhere in town, according to sources.

Meanwhile, Karmazin is thinking of cutting back CBS's 57th Street studio space, too. CBS is negotiating with Donald Trump, who bought the GM Building last summer, to lease out its automobile showroom as a windowed studio for the network's morning show. In the end, Karmazin may find a way to cash in CBS's venerable headquarters and claim a Manhattan landmark of his own as the new face of the Tiffany network.

DAVID D. KIRKPATRICK

Six Degrees of Separation

At first glance, this is perhaps *the* most unlikely group of cocktail-party sudden best friends. *Cabaret* star Alan Cumming and . . . transsexual party favor Amanda Lepore? Conceptual fashion photog David LaChapelle and . . . leonine divorcée Jocelyne Wildenstein? Grungy *I Shot Andy Warhol* actor Jared Harris and . . . *Hedwig* star John Cameron Mitchell? But at last week's Bowery Bar party for British fashion icon Isabella Blow, they all seemed to find much more than, say, ambisexual surrealism in common. "The other day, someone on the street mistook me for Hedwig," said Lepore, shortly before doffing her clothes. "I took it as a compliment."

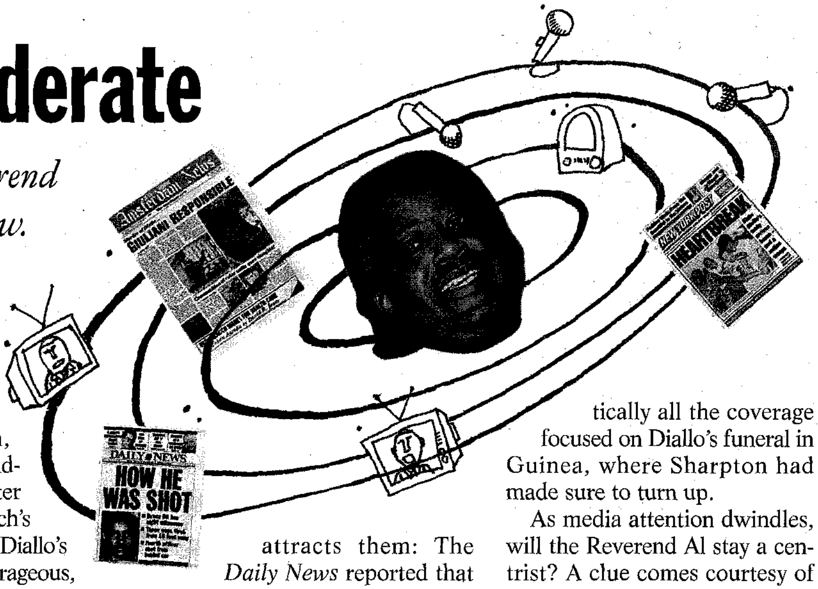
VANESSA GRIGORIADIS

Photographs: top, Philip Greenberg; bottom, Patrick McMullan.

POLITICS

Al Sharpton, Moderate

The Diallo shooting pulls the Reverend Al into the political center—for now.



When he learned the Central Mosque on the Upper East Side was hosting the February 12 memorial service for shooting victim Amadou Diallo with Rudy Giuliani in attendance, Khallid Abdul Muhammad must have decided he couldn't stay away. Bringing a group of masked demonstrators, the guiding force behind last fall's Million Youth March stormed the mosque's gate shouting, "Self-defense!" He called the NYPD's street-crimes units "organized death squads," and one of his group's placards said the mayor should BURN IN HELL. For a guy who had his own brush with the NYPD just a few months earlier, it should have been the ultimate I-told-you-so moment.

But afterward, Muhammad was all but ignored—a footnote in the *Times* story; a page 49 mention in the *Amsterdam News*. Why the cold shoulder? "Khallid Muhammad is not a major player," explains *AmNews* publisher Elinor Tatum, whose paper defended Muhammad after his September march's violent conclusion. Diallo's death seems so outrageous, so unexplainable, that the public reaction to it has locked out the most extreme political voices while co-opting their rage.

Stepping right into the center of the outrage, meanwhile, is Al Sharpton, who doesn't come to the moderate role naturally, either. But the universal shock over this case has had a thawing effect on him. The closer he gets to Diallo's family, the more his image seems to improve. And as a practiced media hog, he gets results, chasing cameras as expertly as he attracts them: The *Daily News* reported that the Reverend Al got three local TV news stations to air one of his press conferences live by guaranteeing the appearance of Diallo's parents. Without Sharpton, Diallo protests seem to go cold: At the start of the shooting's grand-jury proceedings last week, around 1,000 people gathered peacefully outside the Bronx Supreme Courthouse. By the demonstration's end, protesters even started more animated mini-rallies for the benefit of news cameras, but the next day, practically all the coverage focused on Diallo's funeral in Guinea, where Sharpton had made sure to turn up.

As media attention dwindles, will the Reverend Al stay a centrist? A clue comes courtesy of one voice that emerged at the end of the Bronx rally. "Your water supply is vulnerable!" shouted Aton, a man who claimed that white-supremacist groups are amassing biological weapons. Aton was passing out leaflets publicizing an "urban preparedness forum" hosted by the National Action Network. That's Al Sharpton's group. The fringe might no longer have a monopoly on outrage, but its ideas are still within reach—to be used in case of emergency. ROBERT KOLKER

MEDIA

Everything's Coming Up Roseanne

Lesbians! Sex on display! Intertextual readings on the encoding of women's bodies in the age of phallocentrism! When you hire Roseanne as your guest editor—whether you're *The New Yorker*, which published its Roseanne-edited Women's Issue three years ago, or the *National Enquirer*, which published its own Roseanne issue last week—some things never change . . . V.G.

NATIONAL ENQUIRER

I WAS EATEN BY CALISTA FLOCKHART: TWINKIE'S OWN STORY OF ITS TERRIFYING ORDEAL
—Enquirer *headline*

"Jewel has the eyes and gaze of a philosopher. People just can't help but gravitate toward her."
—From a special section on "The World's Most Beautiful Women"

DIFF'RENT STROKES CUTIE MISSING AFTER DEADLY COCAINE BINGE
Says lesbian lover Jennifer Wejbe: "I was bringing home the bacon . . . [Dana] was freebasing . . . and drinking like a fish—she even had a delivery service bring cases of Bud Ice right to our house."

TOWN GIVES TWO THUMBS UP TO GAL WHO MOWS TOPLESS
Says Desiree Davis: "I go topless when I mow so I won't get tan lines. It takes two hours, so I get a good deep tan that lasts all year long."

THE NEW YORKER

"The cascade of change in law and society, almost all of it for the better, has not washed away the ambivalence that many women feel about their 'roles.' " *—From a "Comment" essay by Dorothy Wickenden*

"[Hillary Clinton] explains that she's been trying to practice something called 'the discipline of gratitude' and refers me to a book by a Jesuit priest, Henri Nouwen." *—From "Hating Hillary," by Henry Louis Gates Jr.*

"If the Muse is that dream of Eros which inspires art, and if the woman artist is as possessed by worldly ambition as she is by the dream, then there is probably no alternative to bisexuality."
—From "Is the Muse Dead?," by Arlene Croce

"[I met a woman] who hung out with an S&M club downtown called the Eulenspiegel Society; when she ended up being beaten black and blue (even on the face), I realized she and I were talking a different language of aberrant desire." *—From "Unlikely Obsession," by Daphne Merkin*

Illustration by Scott Menchin.
Photographs: Richard B. Levine (Sharpton); Lisa Rose/Globe Photos (Roseanne).

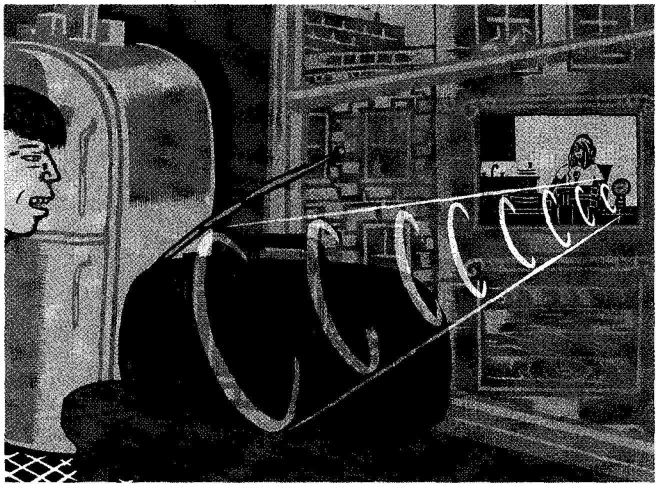
RADIO

No Static at All?

The Lower East Side's FM outlaws could go legit—in spite of themselves.

SIX TEENAGE BOYS IN BASEBALL caps are squeezed into a stuffy eight-by-ten-foot room. The door has three locks. Drapes cover the windows. A desk, the only major piece of furniture, props up two turntables and a microphone. "Yeah, 88.7 FM! Where the females at?" cries the D.J. When a few ladies call in a minute later, as requested, all six guys jump toward the mic. Two of them start rapping, working in the chorus to "Sexual Healing." Free speech never sounded so, well, free.

If Federal Communications Commission agents are still searching for Steal This Radio—the Lower East Side's notorious twenty-watt pirate radio station—they can find it here, in a building that, at the station's insistence, won't be identified. Like all low-power stations, Steal This Radio broadcasts at the dregs of the FM spectrum, far from the big commercial concerns. A collective of about two dozen members runs the place; programming ranges from WLIB-style political talk shows to free-form rap. The station is unlicensed, which has made Steal This Radio a prime target of the FCC since it started broadcasting three years ago, but in a recent preemptive move, four Steal This Radio D.J.'s filed an anonymous suit against the Feds. It was the first time a pirate station went after the FCC before the FCC got to it first. "Basically, the lawsuit says the airwaves are free ground, like a park," explains Barbara Olshansky, the Center for Constitutional Rights lawyer who has taken on the station's case.



But in a surprising maneuver, the FCC is now considering opening the lower end of the FM dial to commercial stations—a move that could start a new micro-radio revolution. The only problem: The current plan won't allow insurgent stations like Steal This Radio to have a license. "Imagine if the Emancipation Proclamation didn't allow runaway slaves to stay free," complains D.J. Thomas Paine, one of the pseudonymous plaintiffs, who hosts a pro-Zapatista radio show at the station.

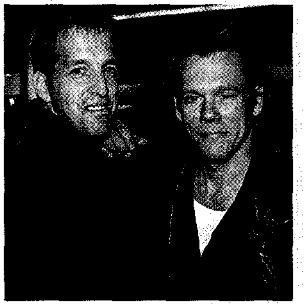
Of course, even if the station does get a license, going commercial could take the wind out of the pirates' sails. Asked what he likes best about micro-radio, Thomas Paine says, "I think the same thing that appealed to Rosa Parks about sitting in the front of the bus. What appealed to me was the ban. It just felt unconstitutional. For me, the clandestine part of it is fun." ROBERT KOLKER

Illustration by Geoffrey Grahn.

THE SCENE

Bacon Bits

Photographs by Patrick McMullan



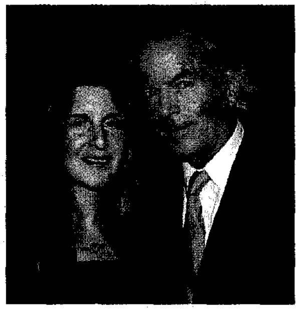
Kenneth Cole and Kevin Bacon at Cole's fashion show to benefit Help USA.

Michelle Williams and Claire Danes at Levi's *Mod Squad* party at Lot 61.

Photographers Andrea Blanch, Roxanne Lowit, and Sheila Metzner at the Barneys and *GQ* party in honor of Lowit.

Estelle Parsons and Lilly Tartikoff at a lunch to announce Showtime's new programming lineup, held at '21.'

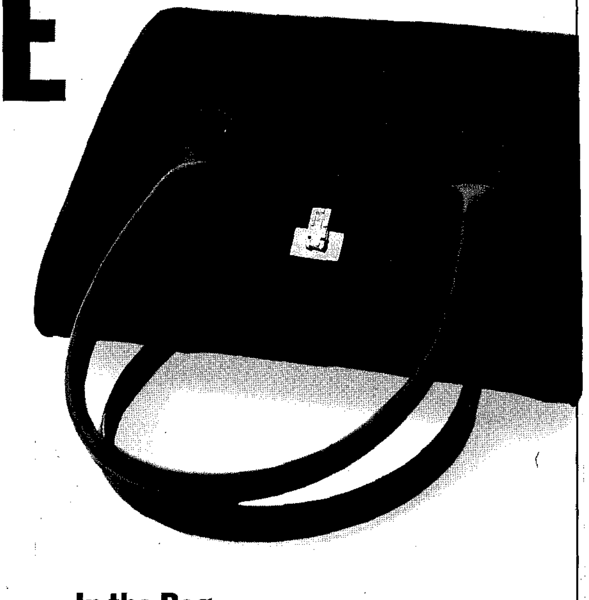
Patrick Whitsell, Vin Diesel, Ben Affleck, Matt Damon, and Kyle Damon celebrating *Glamour*'s sixtieth anniversary.



Kathie Russo and Spalding Gray at B. Smith's celebrating the opening of *Death of a Salesman*.

Jerry Seinfeld and Derek Jeter at Jeter's party to celebrate the ESPY awards.

GOTHAMSTYLE



Corsage Optional

The cheesy prom style that has made its way into every closet—think tube tops—over the past two years will be a keeper for 1999 too. Strapless dresses were everywhere during Fashion Week, as designers from Hussein Chalayan to Mark Eisen bared collarbones for nighttime. But don't start shaking the mothballs from those old Jessica McClintocks; the dress of the moment is more Grace Kelly than Molly Ringwald. Look for these nineties touches: side pockets (Carolina Herrera's chocolate satin gown), swanky fabric (DKNY's lemon sequined version), inverted seams (BCBG's beige mohair number), or extra versatility (TSE's stretch-cashmere "blanket" dress that's so low-key it could double as a nightgown). SHYAMA PATEL

Girls Against Boys

Before stepping onto the Joseph Abboud catwalk, model Pete Fuller tried to assess the value of combining men's and women's fashion shows, which Hugo Boss, DKNY, and Helmut Lang all did last week. "In reality, women and men are together," explained Fuller. "So it makes sense that they would be together in fashion too." Wrong! Apart from one brief moment at Cynthia Rowley's show, where the appearance of a model named Colin in his "cold-weather heather long johns" produced yelps from girls on and off the runway, there was less mixing of the sexes than at a junior-high dance. • Backstage at John Bartlett's show, Gisele, Maggie Rizer, and a row of other female models smoked Marlboro Lights and sat patiently for their braided hair extensions while a pack of male models played touch football in the corridor. "*Puh-leeze,* my *brother* is sexier than those guys," sniffed a Brazilian girl. • At the Avirex show, a male model complained, "I was just on a job in Paris, and the girls were all staying in this five-star hotel. I got two stars. There's no way to feel good about that." Out in the front row, Carly Simon hollered, "Bring me the cute guys! I want to see the cute guys!" There's no way to feel good about *that,* either.

Tableau Talk

While New York designers set out to trump one another on the catwalk last week, Diane Von Furstenberg opted to display her fall collection via stage sets. At her West Village townhouse, market editors mingled amid tableaux of mannequins and the occasional live model—"They're like Christmas windows!" chirped one guest. A smoky-eyed model dressed in beige dealt herself a hand of cards à la *Casablanca.* Across the room, a muse in a magenta dress was seated in a "Chalet Suisse" installation spinning yarn (literally) and fending off a champagne-swilling partygoer. ("Is that silk?" he asked, reaching for the front of her frock.) Did Von Furstenberg forgo the runway in favor of art? "Yes," she purred. "And, you know, it's cheaper." SARAH BERNARD

In the Bag

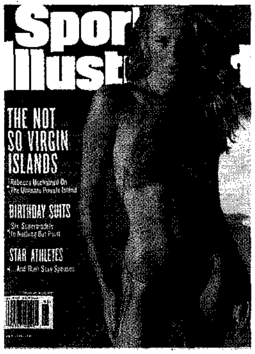
There sure were a lot of fashion editors carrying Fendi purses at bag-maker Lambertson/Truex's show at Seventh on Sixth last week, but if all the cooing over the new handbags with the interlocking *L*'s and *T*'s was any indication, those of us who have been known to spend rent money on handbags will be carrying these cuddly, tactile totes come fall. John Truex calls the bags, made of industrial boiled wool (the kind you find on the floor of a car), "naïve—just felt sewn together with handles." The crowd, of course, was anything but naïve. "If we shoot one, they give it to us free," whispered a market assistant.

ANNA HOLMES

Not-So-Heavy Metal

No one in the bathing-suit niche of the fashion industry was happy to see this year's *Sports Illustrated* cover go to jewelry designer Eve France's stainless-steel chain-mail bikini (worn by the scrumptious Rebecca Romijn-Stamos), but hey, it's a tough world out there, even for bikini designers. France, who has previously created decorations for the dazzling décolletages of Naomi Campbell, Stevie Nicks, and Jennifer Lopez, has been getting quite a response to her $800 suit—Romijn-Stamos herself requested five. "Everyone wants to know if it will rust," says France (who insists it won't). "I don't know if you'd want to *surf* in this; you might lose the bottom," she cautions. "But you certainly won't get any shark bites." Better order soon, though (727-9020): The industrial-strength material is hard to come by during barbecue season, when the manufacturer is busy filling orders for meatpackers' gloves and butchers' aprons.

S.B.



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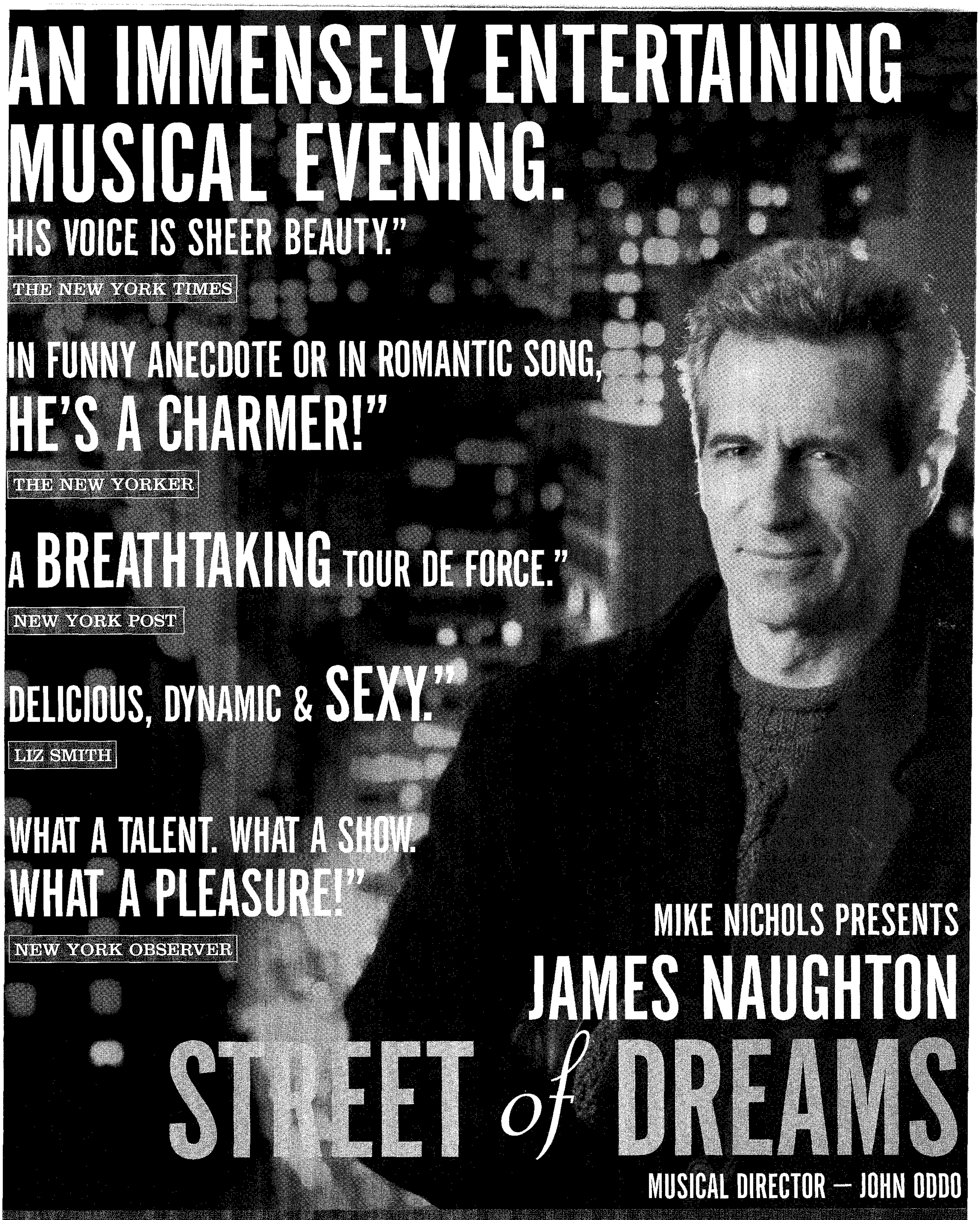

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Bonds and Domination

Forget Ken Starr: The president's old nemesis the bond market has come back to haunt him—with a big assist from Japanese investors who are bringing their money back home.

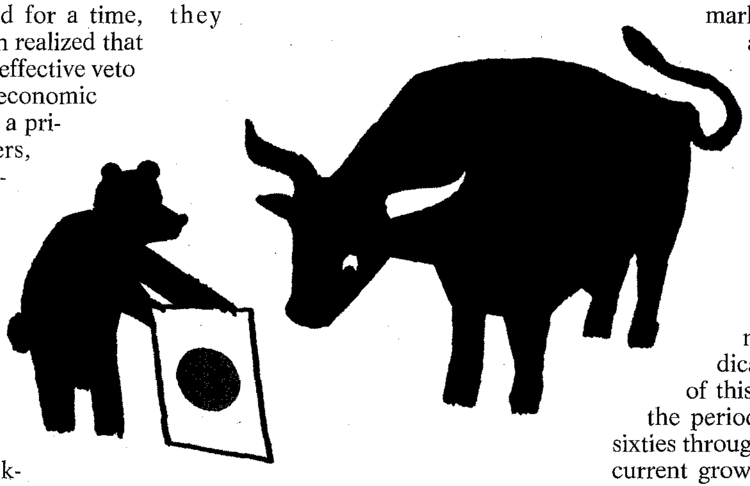
HARD AS IT MAY BE TO BELIEVE right now, the most important thing Bill Clinton ever said was not "I did not have sexual relations with that woman." Although that statement did have the virtue (from the perspective of memorability) of being, well, a bald-faced lie, there's nothing especially profound about it. Consider, by contrast, the passage from Bob Woodward's *The Agenda* in which Clinton asks the rhetorical question "You mean to tell me that the success of the [economic] program and my re-election hinges on the Federal Reserve and a bunch of fucking bond traders?"

Now, *that's* poetry. And for a time, that moment when Clinton realized that the U.S. bond market had effective veto power over all of his economic plans took on the force of a primal scene. Bond traders, with Fed chair Alan Greenspan as their honorary leader, were understood as controlling the secret levers of the economy. If they didn't like what they saw in Washington, or in the housing market, they'd stamp on the brakes, sending interest rates soaring and making unemployment lines longer. Keeping the bond market happy was, it seemed, a president's first priority.

In the past couple of years, though, the bond market has receded in importance, at least in terms of the way the press has covered it. Greenspan is, to be sure, more deified than ever. But the U.S. economy has been humming along so nicely, with low unemployment, no inflation, impressive growth, and a budget surplus, that the idea of inflationary storm clouds on the horizon—which is what bond traders worry about (and by worrying, they make everyone else nervous, too)—has seemed almost inconceivable. At the same time, the explosive rise in the stock market has kept everyone's attention focused there.

As a result, when people worry about the health of the economy today, they don't talk about inflation. They talk about a stock-market crash and what it might do to the rest of the economy. Today, in fact, Clinton might be expected to say instead, "You mean to tell me that the success of the economic program hinges on the Federal Reserve and a bunch of fucking NASDAQ traders?"

The irony, of course, is that even as the bond market has seemed to recede in importance, it's been booming. In 1997 and 1998, the yield on the 30-year U.S. Treasury fell more than a full point, which means that people were buying Treasuries as if they were Furbys. (A bond's yield and its price move in opposite directions, so as a bond's price rises, thanks to higher demand, its yield falls.) In 1998, 30-year Treasuries returned 18 percent, which is better than a lot of mutual funds did over that period.



But although the "inflation vigilantes"—those bearish traders whom Clinton felt he had to appease—may have been in hibernation, they hadn't gone away, nor had their power diminished. In the past two weeks, those bears have come out of their caves, and in combination with a host of other global forces, they've sent long-term interest rates soaring, making the stock market tremble and making everyone wonder whether Greenspan will follow their lead. And what this has made obvious is that the bond market has only *seemed* to matter less in the past couple of years. No matter how much money floods into the stock market, determining interest rates remains the most important thing markets do.

Okay, so bond traders matter. But why have they suddenly decided that it's once again time to worry about inflation, driving up interest rates? In the two weeks between January 29 and February 12, the yield on the 30-year Treasury rose from 5.09 percent to 5.42 percent. Considering that just a month ago, many analysts were talking about a continued bull market in bonds, that spike was a remarkable move. What prompted it?

In the simplest terms, there are two real answers: congenital fear and Japan.

To generalize wildly, people who buy and sell bonds see inflation behind every corner, and they see economic growth as a good indicator of inflation. For most of this century, and especially in the period stretching from the late sixties through the eighties, the idea that current growth necessarily leads to future inflation has, for what have often been excellent reasons, governed not only the bond market but also the Federal Reserve and most economic thinking. So when the most recent numbers on U.S. GDP showed that the economy grew at a blistering 5.6 percent clip in the final quarter of 1998, and at a 3.9 percent pace for the year as a whole, red flags began waving furiously in the breeze.

Of course, the most recent numbers also show that global commodity prices are now at a 21-year low and that the employment-cost index—which measures, as its name suggests, the cost to businesses of employees—rose less than expected in the last quarter. And then there's the actual inflation number, which is minute. Advocates of the so-

Illustration by Igor Kopelnitsky.

called New Economy would say that all this is further evidence that we're in a new era, where the economy can grow quickly without generating inflation—because of heightened global competition, new technology, the Internet, etc. But the bond bears are saying: *Just wait.*

Still, while "congenital fear" is an efficient answer, it's hardly the only answer. The thing about the bond market, after all, is that it's a *market,* and a global one at that. As a result, while "the bond traders" are excellent cardboard villains, it's a mistake to think that there's this small group of people out there sending interest rates up and down according to their current whims. Actually, they're a *big* group of people, and their whims have to do not only with inflation but with things like the price of bonds from other countries, the value of the dollar against the yen, the demand of corporate bonds, and the frequency with which U.S. bonds are sold.

> *Although the* **"inflation vigilantes" may have been in hibernation,** *they hadn't gone away, nor had their power diminished. In the past two weeks,* **those bears have come out of their caves.**

Of all these other factors, one stands out: Japan. The U.S. Government's debt is effectively funded by foreign investors, who love the security and the high (relatively speaking) returns of U.S. Treasuries. A large fraction of those investors are Japanese companies and pension funds. But in the past couple of months, as the yen has risen in value against the dollar (making foreign assets less valuable), those companies and funds have been repatriating assets back to Japan, to lock in profits in advance of the end of that country's fiscal year and, more recently, to take advantage of the higher yields on government bonds there. It's possible that fears about repatriation—which have been a staple of this market since the eighties—are overblown. But Japanese firms did sell 676 billion yen's worth of foreign bonds in January, the first time since March 1998 that they were net sellers of foreign assets.

Of course, no sooner had traders been seized with fear over what all this meant for U.S. bonds than news came that the Japanese Ministry of Finance was going *to start* buying Japanese government bonds. What that really means is that it's taking tentative steps toward re-inflating the Japanese economy by printing yen and pouring them into the economy. Inflation in Japan would mean a weaker yen, which would be good for U.S. bonds. (It would also be good for the Japanese economy, but let's stay focused here.) So last Tuesday, bond prices jumped, and interest rates fell. It's like watching Internet stocks move.

Well, not quite. But the comparison is a valuable one. Because of the nature of bonds—what, after all, is less sexy than a 30-year Treasury note?—we tend to think of the bond market as sleepy. But it is instead almost preternaturally attentive. One reason—apart from simple insanity—why the prices of Internet stocks change so quickly is that those prices are attempts to figure out the value of these companies ten or fifteen years from now. As a result, even a small change in your current expectations can have an enormous effect on your long-term projections. (Changes are magnified over time.) Exactly the same is true of the bond market. Over 30 years, the difference between an inflation rate of 1.5 percent and one of 3 percent is not minor; it's everything. Eternal inflationary vigilance, you might say, is the price of bondholding.

What we've also seen in the past two weeks, though, is that eternal inflationary vigilance is, if only indirectly, the price of stockholding. After sixteen years of a bull market, it's become easy to think not only that stocks will keep going up but that the stock market is, in some sense, independent of everything except what's inside it. But it's no coincidence that the recent sell-off in the NASDAQ—full of highly valued stocks—and the flatness in the stock market as a whole coincided with the falling bond market. Stocks, especially expensive stocks, need low interest rates to thrive, both because low interest rates are good for the economy and because low interest rates make stocks look like better investments. For a couple of years, the bond market's own boom helped make the stock market look like the most powerful player on Wall Street. But even if the past few weeks have been but a blip, the lesson has been relearned. Clinton's bond traders still rule. ▬

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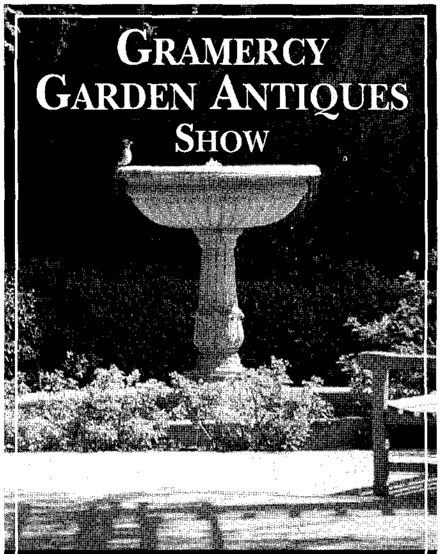

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Brand Monica

The intern formerly known as a little nutty and a little slutty is now, suddenly, media queen of the moment. And she hasn't even gotten her Barbara Walters makeover yet.

WATCHING THE VIDEO DEPosition clips of Monica (rewinding for the pleasure of her expressions and inflections), I keep thinking of that old ad campaign for the furrier Blackglama, with the famous face emerging from the folds of fur and that line of copy: WHAT BECOMES A LEGEND MOST? Not only is Monica's face iconic by now, but it appears to have assumed a classic beauty too—pearls and a chin held high in adversity will do that. (Lillian Hellman, perhaps the most memorable of the Blackglama models, also testified before Congress and bested the political bullies.) And certainly, whatever else emerges from the impeachment story, there will be the legend, told and retold, of Monica Lewinsky.

She was supposed to be branded by the media maelstrom—slut, victim, valley girl. Instead, she became one of the major brand names of our time.

We're only in the initial stages of getting our heads around just how brilliantly she's played this, and how much her media moxie had to do with saving the president of the United States. No doubt much of the continuing impeachment postmortem—*there are no heroes* is the first week's knee-jerk analysis—is going to center around the character, the strategy, and the meaning of Monica.

Indeed, we are just beginning to make the mental move from "poor Monica" to "amazing Monica." During Linda Tripp's recent coming-out appearance on the *Today* show, Jamie Gangel, the correspondent conducting a notably cold and dyspeptic interview with Tripp, referred, pityingly, to Monica's ruined life.

Ruined? *Ruined?*

Perhaps "ruin" is just the old-fashioned way of saying "transformed."

Part of the reality flip, of course, is that the media looks at the play of events as though the media is not the prime player in those events. In a less media-centric culture, Monica might have ended up as a character truly just a little nutty and a little slutty. But with a media that saw her as its own vast opportunity, Monica earned the most valuable economic status available today: not just recognizability, not just celebrity, not just fifteen minutes of famedom, but pervasive, symbolic meaning. She is everywhere. You can't think about politics, morality, media, careers, people in their twenties, one's own youth, without thinking of her. The other day, my 7-year-old son was telling a story—this being Black History Month—about Rosa Parks, who, through some telling confusion (just keying on a woman of stature and historic significance), he kept calling Monica Lewinsky.

Monica is some perfectly updated Jimmy Stewart standing firm in the face of media tyranny, prosecutorial villainy, sexual hypocrisy, political gasbaggery, right-wing skulduggery.

She is the new moral center. Really.

HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

I once worked with a man of almost military bearing from Procter & Gamble. "I'm a branding guy," he would introduce himself to everyone (P&G is sort of the West Point of branding). "Successful branding," he'd say, like some Clausewitz gone astray on Madison Avenue, "is a lot like war. It's strategy and execution. Leave nothing to chance. You can't just win on the battlefield, you have to win hearts and minds too."

No doubt, at some critical point—perhaps as early as that first evening after the FBI and prosecutors ganged up on Monica at the Ritz Carlton last February—somebody (why do I think it was her mother?) started to realize, defensively at first and then proactively, that there was a lot to manage here.

DISCIPLINE, my brand manager would write, repeatedly, on the white board, = BRAND.

This sounds more cynical than I mean it to sound. Monica isn't made up, after all; Monica is real—she gives her own testimony. "A brand is dependent on the performance of the product," my brand guy never let it be forgotten. Still, someone, certainly, saw the potential advantages in the situation. Properly played, what might this all be worth? Could you find opportunity here?

While one can never be ready for the media tsunami, Monica was clearly readier than most. You've got to imagine that she went into her White House internship with all sorts of fantasies about stepping into the limelight, finding fame, being singled out (I, however, do not believe she really said she was going to get her presidential knee pads—even

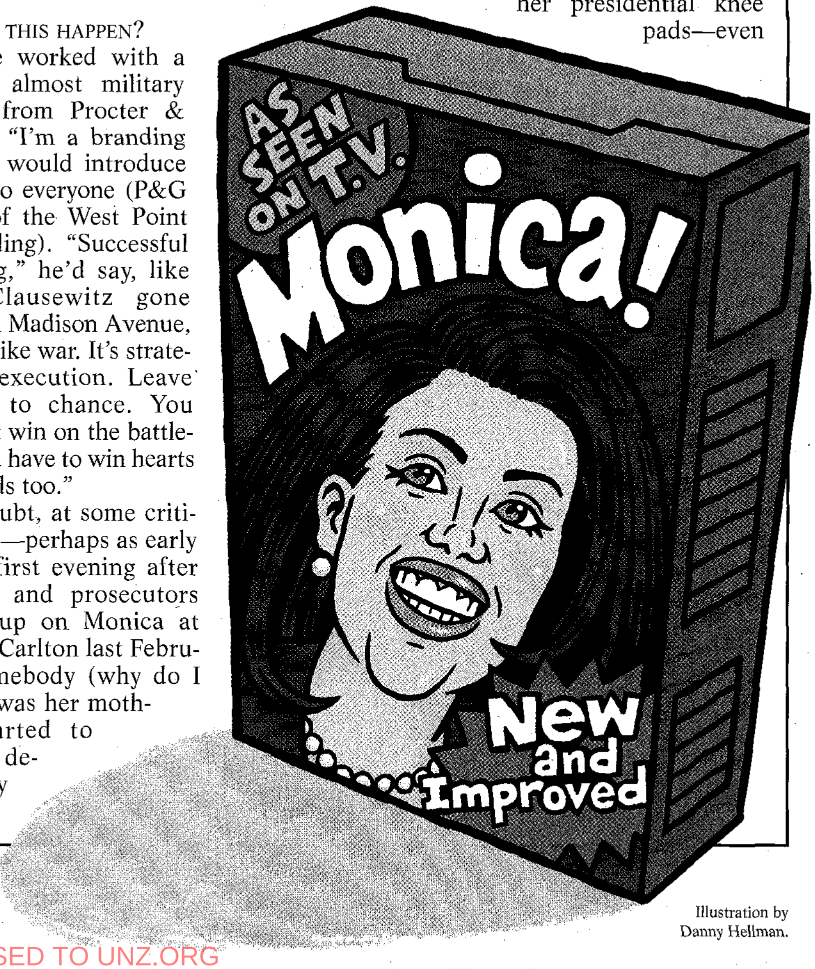

AS SEEN ON T.V.
Monica!
New and Improved

Illustration by Danny Hellman.

a bad novelist would not accept that level of calculation). Such daydreaming might be true of all interns. And she clearly had further yearnings (she wore the thong of ambition).

There's a moment in her video testimony when the House managers are asking her about Vernon Jordan's efforts in the initial stages of her job search—before she was named as a witness in the Paula Jones case—and Monica sniffs, "I hadn't seen any progress." You realize at that point that she had an awfully sophisticated understanding of the forces in play. She knew where she ranked; where Jordan ranked; that this was business. Nothing happens, she understood, unless you make it happen. (I have always thought that Jordan's discussion with Ronald Perelman was probably on the order of, *You'll like this girl, she's tough, she's going somewhere, she's one of us*—and, implicit or explicit, *she's connected to a lot of money.*)

This may be Ken Starr's most fundamental miscalculation: He picked on a girl who not only had a hankering for the limelight and who was looking for a new career challenge but who had media resources (not to mention financial resources—where would the president be if he had seduced a poor girl whom Ken Starr could have controlled?). Her mother writes books about celebrities; her mother's new husband, R. Peter Straus, owned a midsize media company (which included the New York AM station WMCA); her new stepsister, Diane Straus Tucker, late of this magazine and *The Village Voice*, is now a media entrepreneur in Westchester County. Hell, Monica's now a cousin by marriage (through the Strauses) to the Sulzberger family and the *New York Times*. (And she grew up in Beverly Hills, to boot.)

It is not possible to know what effect this brain trust had on the past year. But it is also not possible that these people did not have opinions, strategies, and other people to call upon.

Certainly, Monica executed a flawless media plan: She didn't run from the media (because it will always hunt you down)—she kept her head up and ignored it (because it is just trying to get you to make a fool of yourself). In fact, you let the media gang up on you. You *want* it to bully you (the Princess Di principle)—you want the sympathy vote.

Jamie Gangel's assumption on the *Today* show that Monica's life is ruined means, of course, that Gangel thinks Monica is a fallen woman—that her shame has been outed. Shame is a pitiable and clownish condition, most appallingly pitiable and clownish on television. Paula Jones could not surmount her shame. Monica, on the other hand (and Gangel is right; perhaps no woman has been humiliated more than Monica) didn't break. When she testified in the trial's penultimate week, she confirmed—with a comfortable satisfaction—what we all knew: She had persevered and survived.

This is it. Not crumbling, not being consumed by shame is the crux of the branding strategy. We all live with sexual humiliation, of a greater or less order. Possibly, there is nothing we can relate to more. We know too that, at least heretofore, sexual humiliation kills. Nobody, not in literature, not in life, survives it.

Until Monica.

Not only does she survive a candid camera zooming in on her almost unbearable—not to mention often ridiculous—emotional neediness, but her very survival (Could *you* live through this? we all ask ourselves) is what makes her a dignified and unimpeachable witness.

> *Now, undoubtedly, you would not choose, if you could choose,* **to come to prominence for giving a blow job.** *But in classic marketing terms, it takes not only talent and discipline but often unexpected opportunity* **to break through the clutter** *and* **achieve real brand equity.**

Let us admit there might be another Monica; who can guess what goes on in the mind of that Monica (shamefulness or cold, hard calculation). But the Monica out there—Monica the projection, Monica the brand—that Monica is legitimately heroic.

If she'd crumbled, panicked, cut and run, confessed, we would have discarded her, and chivalry would have required us to discard the president too. But she didn't. She held. And grew. And grew.

Now, undoubtedly, you would not choose, if you could choose, to come to prominence for giving a blow job. That route would be hard for my brand manager to understand. But often a sudden, overnight brand sensation is something that defies convention. In classic marketing terms it takes not only talent and discipline but often an unexpected opportunity to break through the clutter and thereby achieve real brand equity (at the very least, that equity means lifetime financial security for Monica; beyond that, it offers a range of career opportunities, which the Monica brand managers are no doubt evaluating as you read this). A good brand is counterintuitive: Yahoo, Amazon, Snapple, Monica.

"ONCE YOU HAVE ESTABLISHED THE brand," my brand manager constantly preached, "you must support it."

The plan, so far, seems awfully smart.

The fact that Andrew Morton, who had a key hand in developing the Di brand, will write the Monica book is one more savvy move by the Monica team. Indeed, the fact that she isn't writing the book herself, or pretending to, seems to me a much better way to roll out the legend—let a professional tell the story. The book, scheduled for release March 3, is already one of the most-sought-after titles in the country (No. 1 last week on Amazon's list of most-ordered books that have not yet been published). Publishing folk, who were once snotty about the property—for which she received an advance of $600,000—are now talking about its reaching a Colin Powell level, which could yield her several million more.

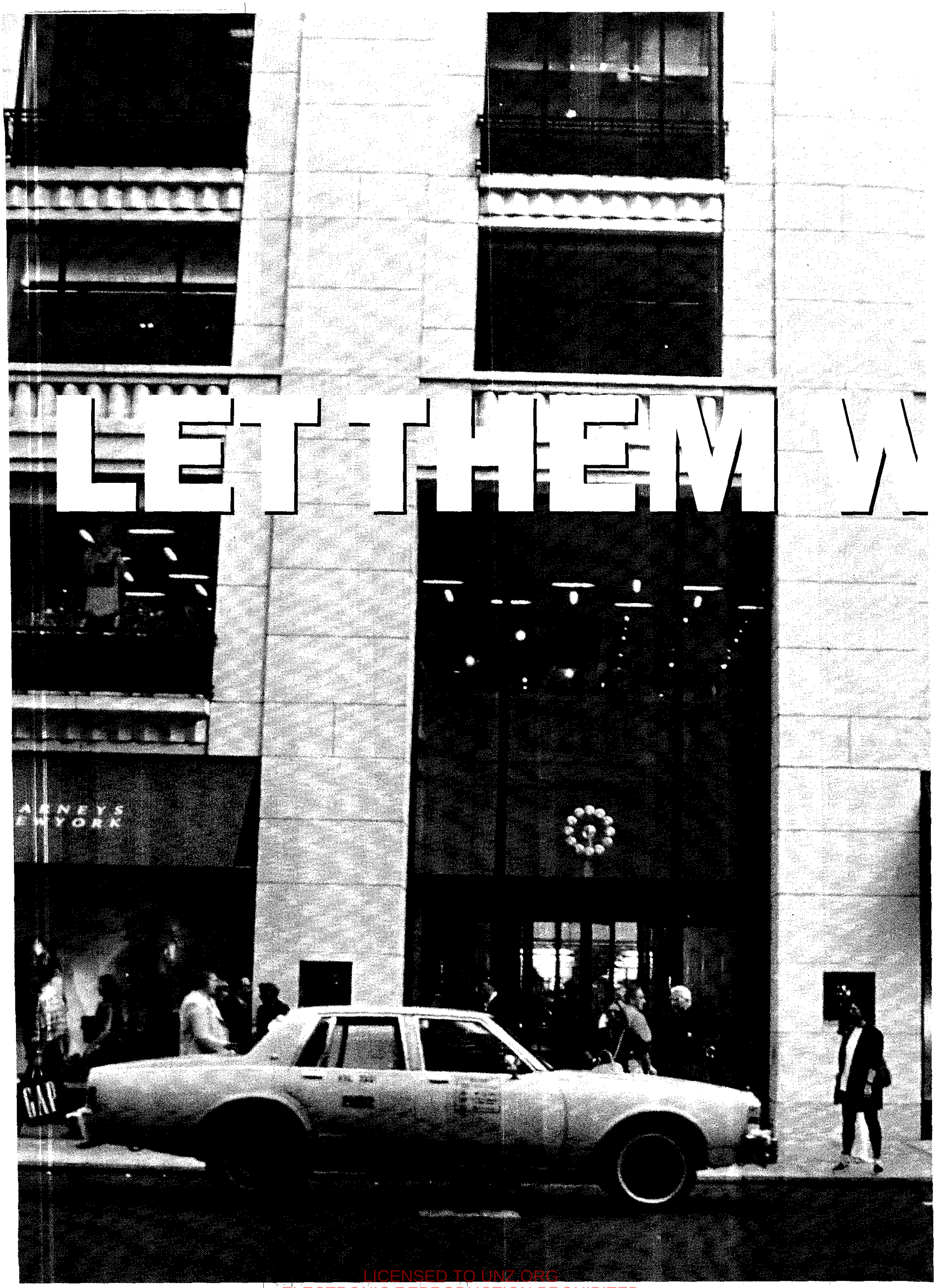
She will earn another $600,000 from an interview with British television. But she has turned down entreaties from Murdoch—interviews, television shows, product plugs, etc. That seems like a good decision. Don't devalue your brand—even for Murdoch's millions.

Barbara Walters, whose interview with Monica is tentatively scheduled to air on March 3 (Ken Starr lifted the embargo on Monica's press interviews last week), was said to have been wringing her hands about Monica's early exposure before the Senate. But the Senate's ambivalence—allowing us to see her, but not enough of her—will surely help catapult the interview into a television event of historic size. Say what you will, you'll be tuning in.

We know her. We're rooting for her. We want to know what she'll do next. That's brand loyalty. ■

E-mail: michael@burnrate.com. Michael Wolff's 1998–99 columns are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

LET THEM W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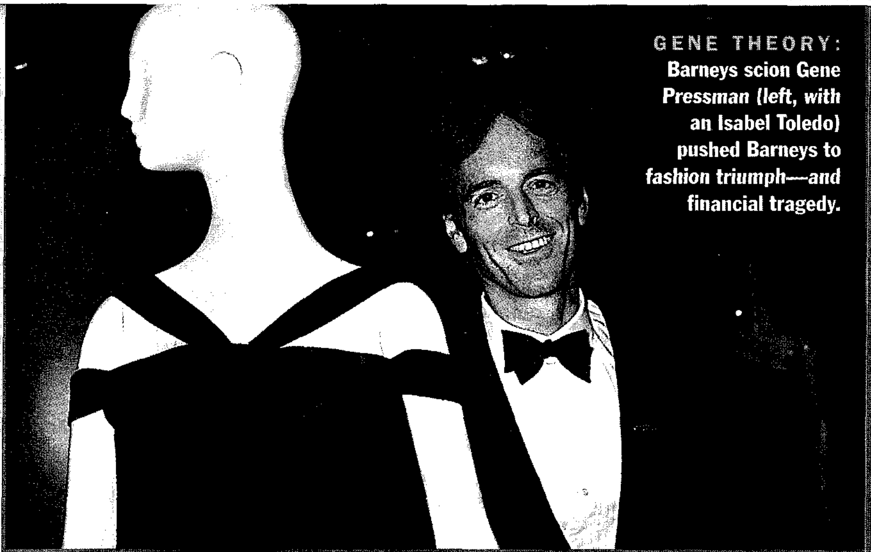


GENE THEORY: Barneys scion Gene Pressman (*left, with an Isabel Toledo*) pushed Barneys to *fashion triumph—and* financial tragedy.

EAR BLACK

In the eighties, Barneys' chic, elitist aesthetic and spare-no-expense opulence changed the way New Yorkers shop and dress, and Gene Pressman was a fashion emperor. *And then, with incredible swiftness, his empire crumbled.* The inside story of the revolution at Barneys' Versailles.

The escalators were screaming that night in 1993 when the Pressmans unveiled their spectacular new store at 660 Madison Avenue. For three years, the Pressman family, which owned Barneys New York, had spent $267 million to make this the most beautiful store in the world. Now the international *haut monde* had come to gawk at what someone else's money had bought: real goatskin and platinum leaf on the walls (silver leaf tarnishes); mother-of-pearl shelves and silk dressing-room curtains; exotic woods like bleached bubinga for the perfume counter, English sycamore for hosiery; and, in the center of the main floor, an intricate mosaic of Carrara marble that was hand-assembled chip by chip.

But as the guests took in all this splendor—along with $250,000 worth of hors d'oeuvre—they couldn't help hearing the weird shrieks and agonized moans that kept intruding on the festivities. It was the 23 brand-new escalators, which were loudly proclaiming, Dorian Gray–like, the enormous problems just underneath the façade. Newly installed escalators must be run for about two weeks to stretch out their belts and work out the kinks. Barneys never had the chance to do this, because the breathless pace of construction continued until just seconds before the guests walked through the door.

In the final three months before the

BY JOSHUA LEVINE

opening, Barneys spent a staggering $75 million on construction. Of that, $10 million alone went for overtime labor as three shifts worked around the clock. Even then, a long list of unfinished tasks were simply camouflaged as artfully as possible so the party could proceed.

In fact, the Pressman family had become skilled at artful camouflage in the previous few years. In the eighties, Gene and Bob Pressman had gradually taken control of the company from their father, Fred. With Gene as the front man and Bob running the finances, Barneys had been transformed from a men's store to New York's preeminent temple of high-end women's fashion. It defined an era, much as Bloomingdale's had the decade before. But the luxe materials and the aura of elitist glamour concealed a stunning truth: Barneys was almost broke. A little more than two years after the new store opened, Barneys declared bankruptcy. And ultimately, the Pressmans lost almost all of the company their grandfather Barney Pressman had started on 17th Street in 1923.

GENE PRESSMAN ARRIVED ON THE scene at Barneys in the mid-seventies, a striking figure in tight jeans, wavy hair flowing over his shoulders. He'd graduated from Syracuse in 1973 and spent a few months in Hollywood, trying and failing to get a foothold in the movies. He came back to the family business at a time when fashion was coming to rival the movies as a wellspring of glamour, and at a time when Fred Pressman's shrewd courting of Italian designers had put Barneys at the cutting edge of men's fashion. Fred's crowning achievement came in 1976, when he negotiated an exclusive arrangement with a young Milanese designer named Giorgio Armani, whose innovative structure, unusual fabrics, and earth-tone palette quickly came to define modern male elegance.

To Gene, at least, Fred Pressman was an indulgent parent. "Basically, I could do anything I wanted, so I went into the management end of the business first," Gene once recalled to an interviewer, with the breathtaking guilelessness that only people who believe they truly deserve their good fortune display. And after that, Fred gave his son his blessing to start experimenting with bringing women's fashion to Barneys. From the first, Gene's taste was exquisite—and expensive. Unlike his father, who'd always stocked an ample supply of modestly priced suits for those who couldn't afford his Armanis and Piatellis, Gene bought only the top designers: Armani, who had branched out into women's wear; Missoni; Sonia Rykiel; Gianni Versace. Coats ran around $400, a simple blouse upwards of $100, and skirts around $140. In the late seventies, this was a great deal of money. Before long, Gene had 7,500 square feet atop Barneys' International House to play with, a rarefied enclave that became almost a private club for the city's most fashionable women. Gene's growing empire was governed using the same velvet-rope philosophy that inhered at Studio 54, which opened in April 1977 and included many of the same faces. Steve Rubell and Ian Schrager had gone to Syracuse with Gene, and Gene became a regular at Studio.

Some longtime Barneys employees looked askance at Gene's new venture, but the father would hear none of it. "Gene was a little difficult, but Freddie had great respect for his talents," says Irwin Grossman. "I'll never forget, when they opened up the women's department on the top floor, everybody wondered whether Freddie was crazy. But he liked this kid, and he wanted to keep him in the business, and the only way he could keep him in the business was to let him run things his way. He says, 'I've got to leave him alone. Gene's got his own idea of where he's going, and I don't want to upset him.' "

Fred told Chester Kessler that he expected Gene to lose several million dollars at the outset, but he figured that Barneys would ultimately spread its gilt-edged aura over less costly women's merchandise that would sell in greater quantities.

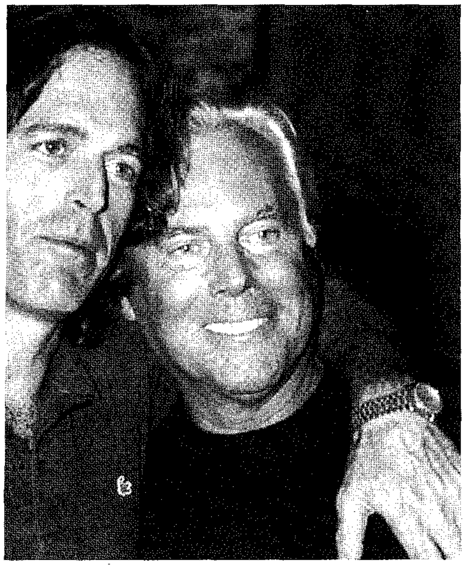
That was not exactly what Gene had in mind, however. Gene extended Fred's distaste for the big-bellied, penny-pinching schleppers who bought from Barney Pressman until that distaste included just about everybody. Barneys hosted a promotional event sponsored by Chanel some years later in the hope of drawing more uptown shoppers to the store. It was a discreet, well-heeled crowd, chic but decidedly not hip—"ladies who lunch," in the words of one of the event's young organizers. "All through it, I can remember Gene fuming, 'When are those ladies going to leave?' I tried to tell him that the whole point was to get them there in the first place."

The considerations that went into making a stable business were far from Gene's mind as he set about building his empire-within-an-empire. Taste was all that mattered—the best taste. From the beginning, Gene made Barneys more daring, more provocative, and more fun than any other women's store in New York. The mission of Gene's fashion cadre was to unearth the next trend while everyone else was cashing in on the current one. This they did with a vengeance, fueled by Gene's infectious boosterism and his giddy excitement at their finds. "It was like a big candy shop for everybody," remembers one employee. "It helped us find unique people, because where else could they buy things that they loved and adored personally? There I was, on a Friday night, rolling the racks myself from the warehouse across the street, so I could get my clothes on the floor. Everybody did that."

She remembers the day in the early eighties when she took Gene to a grungy building on 37th Street to visit the showroom of a then completely unknown de-

"IN THE FAMILY'S EYES, GENE COULD DO NO WRONG, AND BOB NO RIGHT."

Photographs: previous pages, left, Brad Rickerby/Sipa; right, Rose Hartman.



SHIRTSLEEVES TO SHIRTSLEEVES: **Above, grandson Bob, son Fred, patriarch Barney, and grandson Gene in 1979; top, Gene with Giorgio Armani, whom Fred brought to America. Fred (opposite) brought Barneys into the first rank of men's stores.**

signer named Isaia: "We got to the door, and this really huge, jovial black character comes to the door, and he's wearing a crown on his head and screaming at the top of his lungs. It's Isaia, who is no longer with us. But he is one of the most talented young people I've ever met in my life. And in his showroom, he's got a little top called the 'sex top,' and he's got a little skirt called 'the sex skirt,' and a little legging called 'the sex legging.' And it's all black Lycra and black-and-white-striped Lycra. No one was really doing stretch clothing at the time. And Gene went nuts. He just went berserk. Maybe I would have bought a couple of them just to try it, because the guy was such a riot. Gene negotiated exclusivity on the spot. He starts telling Isaia, 'We'll give you a little area of your own, we'll do this, we'll do that,' and I thought, *Oh, my God, he's lost his mind.* But you know what? He was right. From that point onwards, I was selling hundreds of sex sets a week."

Barneys quickly developed a reputation for seizing upon the hottest designers of the moment and either locking in their wares exclusively or buying them with infinitely more panache and chutzpa than its rivals. Comme des Garçons, Thierry Mugler, Jean Paul Gaultier, Yohji Yamamoto, Ann Demeulemeester, Anouska Hempel: The women on intimate terms with these names associated them inextricably with Barneys. "Women went crazy," says Marina Crispo, a vivacious Italian woman who managed the selling floor at the women's store from 1982 to 1995. "I was coming from Bergdorf's, which had all the respect at the time. Bergdorf's is a beautiful institution, but at the time it was like an old lady compared to a trendy young woman, and all of a sudden I went from this old lady walking slowly to a disco with young people jumping up and down."

Gene's vision had as much to do with show business as it did with retailing. Barneys used clothes to make a statement about what it stood for aesthetically. Heidi Godoff, a buyer for Barneys in the late eighties, brought an unknown designer named Christian Francis Roth into the store, along with Roth's M&M jacket. This was a bright-orange thing, plastered from top to bottom with M&M candies, with a $1,200 price tag. "It was simply, like, hideous in a way, but I thought it was pretty interesting and very Barneys," says Godoff. "Everyone loved it. It wasn't really even bought to sell. It was just the kind of thing that was unique and special."

Gene functioned more as the impresario of this spectacle than as its hands-on maestro. He applauded, he goaded, he cursed, he turned thumbs up or down; he supervised the gestalt. But much of his workday was spent exercising in his private gym across the street in the Barneys offices. Employees were often summoned to meet Gene in the gym, and just as often found him naked, toweling off after a shower. That appeared to cause Gene no embarrassment whatsoever. In the middle of a meeting, Gene might suddenly raise his shirt and say, "Hey, wanna feel my stomach?"

He used his rangy good looks and buoyant charm to maintain a steady flow of girlfriends. He had always idolized Jim Morrison, rock and roll's patron saint of preening narcissism, who drank himself to death in Paris in 1971. Gene was always humming Doors tunes and hung a poster for the movie *The Doors* in his office. It's a style that never strays too far from self-parody. But the women who didn't find Gene absurd often found him devastating, although there were many who found him both. "He would always go for the best-looking women, but he was like a child with a parent, never taking no for an answer," says a close friend from Gene's college days who often went nightclubbing with him in the late seventies. Gene had a patented seduction line when a woman rebuffed his initial pitch: "Come on!"

SINCE HIS EARLIEST ADVENTURES IN WOMEN'S fashion, Gene had always pestered his father about opening a full-blown women's store, one that would put Barneys on a par with the stores uptown. And for all his misgivings, Fred knew that a thriving women's business would help Barneys in a number of ways. "You're either in the women's business or you're out of the business," Fred told *New York* in 1986, and he was right. Women have always shopped for their men—by one estimate, their say-so governs almost half of all menswear purchases.

So, after a number of false starts, and much wrangling with its Chelsea neighbors, Barneys began construction on a new women's store in a row of buildings along 17th Street known as "the townhouses." The architect of record on the project was Beyer Blinder Belle, a firm known for its historical renovations; Dick Blinder had worked for Fred Pressman numerous times over the years. But the entire family and several other architects and consultants, including names like Philippe Starck and Andree Putnam, got involved in the project. The process was chaotic, to say the least. "I go into this meeting, and the family ended up in a screaming match with each other," says one young architect. "There was such a collection of huge egos, you just couldn't contain them in the same room together."

Over time, the younger generation's egos began to win out. "As the project was sort of halfway done, they began making a transition from Fred to Gene and Bob," says Dick Blinder. "They appeared on the scene and started to assert their own point of view and perspective, changing things."

Gene's collaborator on the project was an architect named Peter Marino, who'd worked on Gene's house in Larchmont in 1982. In 1969, when he was 20, Marino took a year off from school and fell in

Photographs: clockwise from top, Mauricio Miranda/Women's Wear Daily; Fred R. Conrad/New York Times Co./Archive Photos; UPI/Corbis Bettmann.

with Andy Warhol. Marino emerged from those years with commissions to renovate Warhol's townhouse and the Factory, the studio on Union Square where Warhol housed his 24-hour-a-day art party.

Marino has compared himself to Stanford White, who often accompanied his Gilded Age clients on blowout shopping sprees through the Old World. It is an apt comparison, at least in that sense. Like the Pressmans themselves, Marino has a knack for tracking down the perfect object, whatever its price. When it's needed, he will also design for his clients the furniture, the fabrics, the light fixtures, even the dinner plates. This is very profitable work. For his custom creations, he usually tacks on a commission of between 25 and 35 percent over the cost. Marino ended up designing the second through sixth floors of the women's store. Original furnishings by twentieth-century masters like Ruhlmann, Porteneuve, and Josef Hoffmann reflect Gene's affection for early Art Deco and Wiener Werkstätte. French artisans were flown in to hand-paint trompe l'oeil motifs on the walls. Another set of artisans applied costly silver leaf to the elevator doors, square inch by square inch. Dick Blinder had designed an oculus window for the sixth floor; Gene had it ripped out.

"Honestly, money was no object," says one of the architects on the project. "They really were not concerned about the bottom line. Most owners, the bottom line comes first, you know? The Pressmans really had no concern for it. Honestly. They would say that they wanted this to be the most beautiful store in the world."

Many people say they succeeded stunningly. For all the caprice and chaos that accompanied its construction, the store was a jewel when the Pressmans finally finished it—it opened in 1986, two years late. The women's store stood out for its unfussy elegance and a level of taste that immediately made its competitors look shabby by comparison. Merchandising considerations incorporated into the store's design have ended up exerting a lasting influence on the way other retailers display their wares. In the standard department-store design at the time, for instance, showrooms were bordered by what was known as a "curtain wall," with merchandise lit from fixtures hidden behind it. In Barneys, Marino brought the ceiling right to the wall, and he lit the merchandise through incandescent spotlights.

"If you go into Bloomingdale's or Saks today, a lot of them are now doing the same thing," says the Barneys architect. "They've eliminated the curtain wall, and they're spending the money on this other idea. Peter and Barneys initiated this, although a lot of the ideas were Fred's. Fred was a master at presenting merchandise."

But the final price was truly astronomical. When the family was first planning the women's store, it commissioned two consultants to estimate the costs. The estimates came in at $8 million and $6 million. Bob Pressman was shocked that anyone could imagine the cost mounting as high as $8 million, and so plans were drawn up according to the lower estimate. The final bill for the women's store: $35 million.

GENE PRESSMAN'S ELITIST VISION was gleefully adopted by the fashion cadre he assembled. Patrick McDonald remembers a moment that defined the period's ethos. Connie Darrow had just laid out an array of Chanel jewelry in a display case—Gene Pressman had hired her out of Bergdorf Goodman to run the accessories department at the women's store. An eager shopper was inquiring about the price of a pair of Chanel earrings, and McDonald, who managed the fourth floor, where the eveningwear was sold, was matter-of-factly reeling off some shockingly high numbers. The woman replied that she could get the same Chanel earrings at an uptown store she knew for half the price.

"I said, 'Well, why don't you?' " McDonald remembers. "I mean, really, if I have to explain Chanel jewelry to you, then you shouldn't be buying Chanel jewelry! And that's how Connie and I became friends. Connie liked my guts because we'd get certain people in and I didn't give a shit."

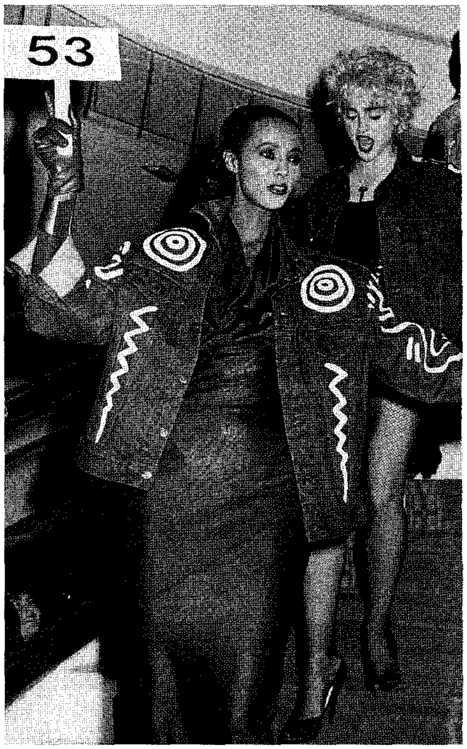
Patrick and Connie lived for fashion. He wore his black hair slicked back and tight on the scalp, with long sideburns that swooped down to two pencil points on his jawline, and heavy black eyeliner. On the right side of his powdered cheek, he drew in a beauty mark, like Madame du Barry. Connie rimmed her entire eye with dark-brown makeup on a base of white paste, raccoon-style, and cut her hair like Louise Brooks, with a straight bob across her forehead. She asked Patrick to call her Lulu, after Louise Brooks's best-known role.

"She was a freak, like I'm a freak," says McDonald. "And I appreciated that." But even those who disliked her will all say this: Connie Darrow had the best eye and the best taste of anybody working that side of the street in New York.

Barneys made its particular notion of stylishness into a new kind of uniform. Barneys dressed the quintessential New York woman of the eighties, which meant arming her for the kind of sexual and economic combat the time and place provoked. The look popularized by Barneys came in different versions, but it was usually tough, austere, and unflouncy.
There was a horror of appearing "bourgeo
a class of people it was mandatory to *épa*
even while it produced almost all of Barne
customers.

Perhaps the most important element un
ing its disparate styles was a color, and t
color was black. If there's one thing associa
with Barneys and the women who swore by
sensibility, it was their rejection of God's wh
rainbow. "Everybody always said there was
much black," huffs a former Barneys public
"There was. So what?"

In the hands of Gaultier, it was the black
the sadomasochist; in the hands of Ann I
meulemeester, a gifted Belgian designer int
duced by Barneys, it was the black of the tr
ic poet. In a less challenging context, it was
classic black of Chanel's legendary "little bla
dress," a style that was de rigueur in every N
York woman's closet. "Gene hired me on
spot for that kind of minimalist sensibilit
says Heidi Godoff. "It's the kind of aesthe
that someone has or doesn't have. It's what
er is most pure, without any frill or anythi
added. It's all in the cut and the qual
whether it was discreet and subtle, or co
pletely daring and over-the-top. Barneys
black on the map, and they put that severe

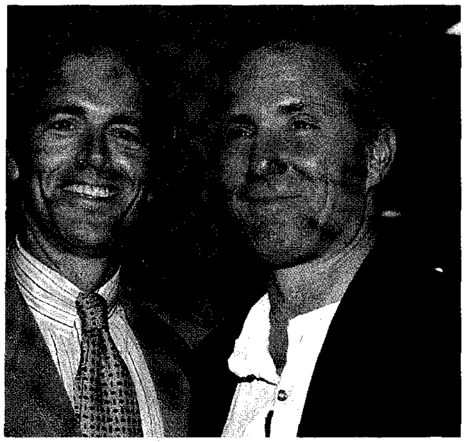


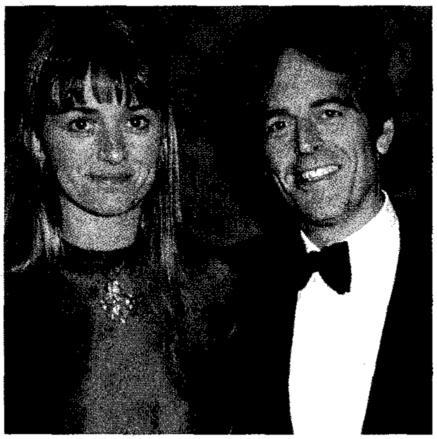
houette on the map as well. I don't know th
any other store thought like that, even wh
another store had the same designer, li
Moschino. Bergdorf had Moschino, too, but
was bought in a different way for Barneys."

Barneys was famous for insisting that
signers modify their creations to its specifi
tions, often functioning as a design consulta
itself. Most designers were hard-pressed
refuse—such was the power and leverage
Barneys in the women's fashion business. Mc

often than not, it worked. “You would come in and almost try to redesign their whole line,” recalls Godoff. “We were always reworking whatever they had to fit into the Barneys look.”

DURING THE FASHION SHOWS IN EUROPE, you could spot the Barneys crew a mile away. They strutted in close formation, anywhere from eight to twenty of them. In Paris, you might see them trooping out of l’Hotel, just around the corner from the Beaux-Arts, and the place to stay in Paris in the late eighties. In London, it was Blakes, the hotel Anouska Hempel owned, and in Milan, the Principe. “There was a sense that we were creatively superior, and I think we really were,” says Beverly Wilburn, who did the first women’s line with Dries van Noten for Barneys, and brought in Galliano, too. “You know, at the time I weighed about 120 pounds, I had black hair with massive curls, and I wore only Alaïa, Isaia, and these little black dresses. And Wendy Burke is like this hot little thing with the little haircut, sort of the Winona Ryder kind of look, all in Chanel. David Rubinstein, this dweeb in Gaultier, he was just so visual. And of course, Connie—95 pieces of jewelry, and brown around the eyes, with two pink spots on her cheeks.





THE FABULOUS YEARS: Above, Gene and his wife, Bonnie, in 1993; Gene knew Studio 54 owner turned hotelier Ian Schrager through college (top); Iman and Madonna at an AIDS benefit at 17th Street in 1986 (left).

“FIND THE MONEY SOMEWHERE ELSE. I’M GOING TO DO WHAT I’M GOING TO DO.”

“We were like an orphanage full of well-treated orphans. Every single one was really kind of an outcast, really idiosyncratic in their own way. You were the chosen, you know? And Gene was almost like, you know, Moses. But I never got over it. I just never got over it. You know?”

The frenzy that Barneys whipped up in the late eighties came from more than the merchandise it sold. There were, of course, the witty, topical, scathing windows, done by Simon Doonan, whom Gene had hired from the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Costume Institute, where he had worked with Diana Vreeland. More than anything, Doonan’s painstakingly flip sensibility defined the public face of Barneys.

WHILE GENE AND HIS PEOPLE PUSHED THE limits of what a clothing store could be, Bob Pressman had to wrestle with a more prosaic problem: The women’s store wasn’t making any money. “It was merchandised like a boutique, but it was a full store,” says a former executive high up in the Barneys organization. “Volume was always less than anticipated. Gene’s response was always that the plan was too high, the people in the store are lousy, somebody’s screwing things up.”

Adds another executive, “People look at the years from 1985 to 1992 as the golden years at Barneys, but the scoreboard says you’re bleeding money and you’re not going to get to play anymore.”

The Pressmans’ way of life was lavish. The family collectively took around $5 million a year out of the store in salaries, but still the bills piled up. There were houses to maintain, and like the store, they required continual redecoration by Peter Marino. In 1983, Gene and his wife, Bonnie, bought a rambling, 25,000-square-foot Tudor house on a bluff overlooking Long Island Sound in Larchmont. The house feels distinctly like the twenties, the period whose decorative style Gene liked best, and Gene always claimed—with no basis in fact—that it had once belonged to the famous gangster Bugsy Siegel. There were constant parties, and the expensive wine from the 14,000 bottles Gene kept in his cellar flowed freely. “We would have these wine tastings, and Gene absolutely could not tell one wine from another, but he was sort of impressed with the cost of it,” says Neil Kraft. “ ‘This is a $100 bottle of wine,’ he would tell you. You know, you would sit down in a chair and he’d tell you how much the chair cost.”

Gene was the family’s most conspicuous consumer, but he was hardly the only Pressman with a taste for the high life. Nancy, one of Gene’s two sisters, spent $1.2 million to redecorate her home, Peter Marino once again applying his high-priced touch. The Pressman women also helped themselves to the store’s overpriced merchandise with a free hand. *Inventory shortage* is the term applied to discrepancies between the inventory recorded as sold and the actual depletion of the stock on hand. Shortage covers merchandise theft, but it is also a handy catchall for sloppy bookkeeping and other paper errors that creep into the records. Like, for instance, goods taken by Pressman family members that the family might forget to pay for.

Barneys listed its inventory shortage as 2 percent, which is around the industry average. In fact, the real inventory shortage came closer to 9 percent of sales. Woefully inadequate inventory control played a part. But ineptitude doesn’t nearly account for all of that inventory shortage. “He pulled out of his pocket some tickets, some stubs from merchandise tickets,” recalls a former senior executive of a meeting she had with a senior Barneys accountant. “And he said, ‘What happens is, when the family need clothes, they just walk in and take them, and they usually just leave me with the stubs. But it’s never recorded that way.’ ”

Barneys workmen routinely worked on the Pressman residences; and a host of other services, from Gene’s boxing trainer to Nancy’s psychiatrist, were charged to the store. None of these expenditures appeared in the Barneys books.

There were always several sets of financial statements, depending on who was supposed to be looking at them. This isn’t against the law, but it is misleading, which indeed was the whole point. The

Photographs: clockwise from top, Rose Hartman; Ron Galella Ltd.(2).

buyers for the women's store, for instance, lived in blissful ignorance of the financial hemorrhage seeping through the minimalist frocks they purchased. Knowing might cramp their style, it was feared. "The women's store wasn't making money, but no one wanted them to know so they wouldn't cut back," says an accounting executive.

Bob would grumble halfheartedly at his brother's heedless spending. Occasionally, he would plead for a little restraint. Fred preferred not to ask, or pretended not to hear. "They don't tell me what's going on," he would say with a resigned shrug.

Gene was made aware of the problems—and, essentially, ignored them. "Go find the money someplace else," an executive remembers Gene telling Bob in one meeting when Bob suggested cutting back spending on advertising or on the lavish buying caravans Gene regularly led across Europe. "I'm going to do what I'm going to do," declared Gene.

Here is where Bob made another important discovery that was to become a hallmark of the new Barneys management style. Bob discovered that you didn't have to pay people even close to on time, and some people you didn't have to pay at all. "That's when a number of the old-time contractors just stopped doing business with Barneys," says a former executive. "Because Bobby would cut the bills down. He would pay late. And then pay them and tell the bank to hold the check."

Did the Pressman family thank Bobby for playing the heavy? Not then and not ever, and what he saw as their ingratitude tortured him. "In the family's eyes, Gene could do no wrong, and Bob could do no right," says someone who worked closely with the family. "Bob was always the official scapegoat."

NONE OF THE FINANCIAL TURMOIL beneath the surface at 17th Street did anything to shake the Pressmans' firm conviction that Barneys must keep growing. Quite the opposite: The turmoil itself made expansion look even more appealing. The Pressmans never liked to solve problems by rolling up their sleeves and just fixing them. Mere tradesmen could do that. They preferred solutions that required "vision," a favorite word that argued for taking the heart-stopping swan dive into the unknown. "You couldn't just sit still," a former senior Barneys executive says. "You would see your margins erode. You couldn't raise prices freely, and there was an awful lot of pressure on costs."

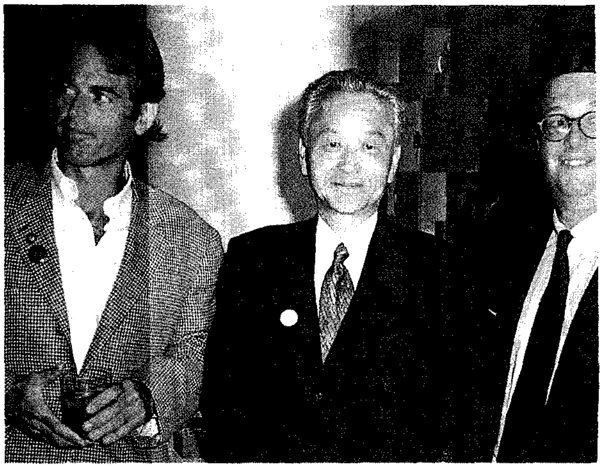
As early as 1986, the family had started looking for a partner with deep pockets who would grasp hold of their hands, ask no questions, and leap alongside them. Bob engaged the gilt-edged investment-banking firm Goldman, Sachs to help identify suitable candidates, but an early walk around Wall Street yielded nothing; word had gotten around that the Pressman boys could be a little erratic. So Goldman looked to Japan, whose economy was in overdrive and whose large retailing concerns were looking to expand.

Barneys began negotiations with a huge ($4 billion in annual sales), 100-year-old retailer called Isetan in the fall of 1988. Isetan's head was a fourth-generation scion named Kuniyasu Kosuge, considered very much a hothead in a country run by old men. The striking parallels between the two young-men-in-a-hurry who ran their family businesses spread a benevolent aura of faith and goodwill over the initial meetings between Barneys and Isetan. For Kosuge, vision was everything, and he dreamed of making Isetan a global force. He pushed Isetan into new markets—Taiwan, Shanghai, even London. He wore stylishly baggy green suits, which only made the blue-suited elders on the Isetan board even warier of him.

From the first meetings, Gene and Kosuge recognized each other as kindred spirits. "Leaving Kosuge and Gene alone in a room for too long was dangerous," says a Barneys executive. "They both saw the world through similarly tinted glasses."

The Pressmans ultimately negotiated an astonishingly good deal. The first part of the deal established a joint venture between Barneys and Isetan to build a chain of Barneys stores around the U.S. The plan called for 25 to 30 Barneys outposts of around 6,500 square feet, each selling mostly women's clothing. Barneys would also provide technical assistance to Isetan to teach the Japanese how to achieve the kinds of margins Barneys boasted in New York. Of whatever gross profits Barneys Japan brought that exceeded a margin of 37 percent, Isetan would pay the Pressmans half. A kind of exchange program was set up in which young Isetan employees were dispatched to New York to study at Pressman U. while Barneys executives worked closely with Isetan in Japan.

What Isetan really hoped to do was apply these lessons to its Isetan stores, which is where many of the young people they called the "Isetan kids" would be sent after they returned. If Isetan could manage to pick up just an extra 7 percent in margin on even half its sales—not a fantastical expectation—it would boost



PARTY TILL YOU DROP: **From top, Bob and Gene during construction at the Madison Avenue store; Gene and Bob with Isetan head Kazumasa Koshiba at the opening-night party; opening-night revelers Diane von Furstenberg and Barry Diller.**

its bottom line by $140 million a year. A windfall of that magnitude could justify the whole deal, whatever else happened.

The capstone of their relationship would be three stores in New York, Beverly Hills, and Chicago, for which Isetan would put up 95 percent of the money, the Pressmans the remaining 5 percent up to a cap: $147 million for New York, $65 million for Beverly Hills, and $35 million for Chicago.

Bob was blunt about the true outcome of the negotiations. "We fucked the Japanese," he crowed. He had indeed, if you were inclined to analyze the deal copulationally. "I think Bob was only happy when the other person in a deal was unhappy," says an executive who worked closely with him.

AFTER LOOKING AT THE OLD ALEXANDERS site (too far east, too déclassé) and a couple of other midtown buildings, the Pressmans began negotiating to buy the Metlife Building, at 660 Madison Avenue, between 61st and 62nd Streets. It would be difficult to find a lusher spot—just at the headwaters of two golden shopping tributaries, where the tide from Madison Avenue's precious boutiques to the north empties into the overflow from Fifth Avenue's grand department stores to the south. Barneys finally agreed to buy nine floors of the building, comprising about 240,000 square feet, which was 50 percent more space than Barneys and Isetan had planned on. "There wasn't any discussion about this with Isetan," says a former Barneys executive. "It seems strange, doesn't it?"

Things would get stranger, as they always did when the Pressmans were involved in a construction project. Each floor of the uptown store got its own designer from Peter Marino's staff. It was one way to give each floor a distinct, boutiquelike character, and it also served a political function. It gave the Pressman responsible for each department his or her own architect, which saved that Pressman the headache of trying to pry a single architect from the grasp of another Pressman. One thing none of the architects had to worry about was the budget. "We never spoke about the budget, that's for sure," says an architect. "Budget was never an issue."

The centerpiece of the main floor is an elaborate inlaid mosaic of white and gray Carrara marble. The pattern was worked out at the corners in negative images of itself, so that if one corner realized the pattern in white and gray, the opposite corner would mirror that geometry in gray and white. These positive and negative patterns interlocked as they worked their way toward the center of the mosaic. The intricacy of the pattern required the artisans employed by Franz Mayer of Munich to lay the floor out by hand, tile by tile, as they went along, to make sure it fit together seamlessly. This floor alone cost $100 per square foot—$600,000 in all.

The uptown store's less noticeable features got the same Versailles treatment. Marino found a small workshop in Indonesia that would apply a crackled mother-of-pearl finish to wooden shelving. The mill workers at Chantiers-Baudet in France would carve the wood shapes, then ship them to Indonesia, where the pattern would get its mother-of-pearl overlay. The Indonesian artisans would then send their work back to Chantiers-Baudet for final assembly. The bill for this kind of treatment came to roughly $300 a square foot.

"The Pressmans kept saying they wanted this to be the most beautiful store in the world," says one of the top architects on the project. "We did a whole boutique with goatskin—the whole boutique was lined with goatskin! I was arguing that you could do this in a *faux* finish, and you might spend an eighth of the price. The response was like, why use *faux* goatskin when you could use real goatskin?"

"They did a lot of stupid things," says Michael Ratner, whose firm, Richter & Ratner, did most of the interiors for the Barneys America stores. "They would order all these exquisite things, and you would come back six months later and it would look like shit. Peter would show Gene something that would cost an outrageous amount of money, and Gene would love it, so they would go ahead and just do it."

Isetan had problems of its own. The Japanese bubble burst in 1990, and Isetan failed to make a profit for the first time since 1961. The Pressmans had leverage over their Japanese partners, however, and they used it, demanding further funds to cover their cost overruns. "The choices weren't too pretty," remembers an insider. "For months and months, Isetan wouldn't talk about it, and then when they did, they kept saying, 'You ask too much.' We told them they had no choice." And in the end, Isetan reluctantly signed another check for $120 million to keep the Madison Avenue project going.

Weakened by its enormous debt, the Kosuge family was forced to sell most of its company to Mitsubishi in 1993. Kosuge was ousted as president in the summer of that year and took the ceremonial title of honorary chairman. In Kosuge's place, Mitsubishi installed Kazumasa Koshiba, a blue-suited Isetan veteran with 35 years' experience in the mundane tasks of administration and sales. Kuniyasu Kosuge resigned from the board in 1996, leaving his family with nothing but a 0.43 percent stake in the kimono company that the Kosuges had run for over a century.

The mad year leading up to the opening date of the Madison Avenue store—September 8, 1993—was marked by chaos, exhaustion, and rancor. The Pressmans were constantly at one another's throats. Gene needled his wife, Bonnie, mercilessly over the layout of the ground floor, which Bonnie nominally oversaw. She had been named senior vice-president in 1991, and she wanted hosiery in the back. Gene insisted it be in the front. Gene would berate her publicly at design meetings: What the fuck did Bonnie know, anyway? She was just a model, with no education.

The Marino architects used to call Bonnie's heavy-footed trudge down the corridor her "death row" walk. Most people thought her talented and capable, but it was her long-suffering stoicism that defined her persona in this Yiddish Theater Euripides.

The marriage had all but broken down by then. Husband and wife were living on separate floors of the Larchmont house. Everybody knew Gene was having a liaison with a girl from the publicity department and borrowing apartments from friends around town for afternoon trysts. "Couldn't he at least afford his own apartment?" one of them wondered.

Bob kept the details of the mounting crisis to himself and resisted all of Fred's entreaties to tell him what in hell was really going on. "It will be taken care of," he assured Fred and Gene. Bob saw himself as the lone

(continued on page 121)

GENE BERATED HIS WIFE LOUDLY AT DESIGN MEETINGS.

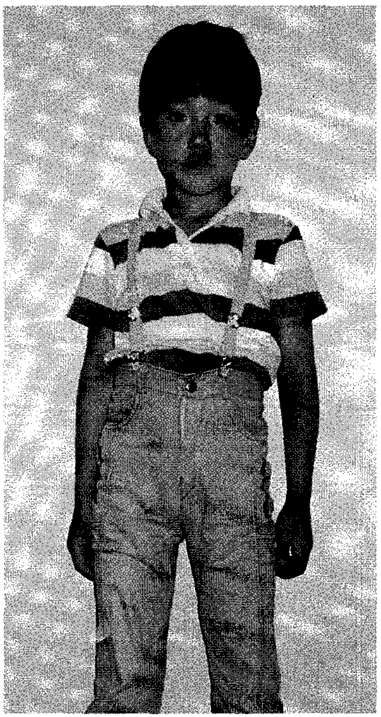
Photographs: top, Fred R. Conrad/New York Times Co./Archive Photos; center, Robin Platzer; bottom, Rose Hartman.

"We gave him up to save his life"

For five increasingly horrific years, the adoption agencies insisted that Chad Ostrowski's memory of a father in Korea was fantasy. When Anne Marie and John finally learned the truth about their beloved boy, they made the ultimate sacrifice.

By Peg Tyre

On August 11, 1989, a pale, anxious 8-year-old boy wearing a thin cotton T-shirt and shorts walked through the arrivals gate at Kennedy airport and into the arms of John and Anne Marie Ostrowski. They held balloons inscribed MOM AND DAD in Korean, the only language their new son, whom they had already named Chad, understood. A shy, skinny boy with liquid brown eyes, his gleaming hair teeming with lice, Chad had no luggage, no toys to occupy him for the 24-hour journey. ● "He didn't carry a teddy bear, a blanket, a stuffed animal, nothing," recalls Anne Marie, a slight, intense woman with the physical exuberance of an aerobics instructor. "Not even a jacket for a flight halfway around the world." ● Chad had been placed with the Westchester couple by New Beginnings Family and Children's Services, a Mineola, Long Island, agency specializing in the adoption of foreign-born children. His birth mother was unmarried, New Beginnings had told the Ostrowskis, whose first son, John II, was 10 years old. Chad had no other family, they were told, and his mother, too poor to raise him, had abandoned him at an orphanage near the southern tip of Korea. ● Chad, who was soon wearing spanking-new jeans and a black Members Only jacket—the late-eighties uniform of every suburban kid—immediately began to struggle with English. It wasn't long before he was able to make himself understood. But what he told his American parents in his halting English shocked the Ostrowskis and launched them on a painful journey that would stretch over a turbulent decade. Before it was over, their dream family would be in tatters. And Chad, their beautiful, bright child, would be on the brink of self-destruction. ● "You say you are my



LG 싸이언
감성인식 PCS폰

Child of mine: Opposite, John and Anne Marie Ostrowski; left, photo of Chad provided by the adoption agency in 1989; above, Chad leaving with his father in Korea last April.

Photograph by Ethan Hill

family, but I already have a family," Chad told Anne Marie and John. "I have a father, brothers, and sisters back in Korea. Aunts and uncles, too. My father loves me, and I want to know what happened to him."

Nine years after Chad uttered those words, the Ostrowskis would travel with him back to Korea to reunite their son with his biological father. It was a heartrending decision, the Ostrowskis say, because they love Chad as much as any parent can love a child. But after years of battling doctors, psychologists, the courts, and adoption agencies here and in Korea, Anne Marie and John say they did what they knew was right. Chad had showed them over and over that he could not—would not—live a lie.

"I needed to know my family," he says simply.

Now nearly 18, Chad—born Yong Seong Park—lives with his father, Ki Joon Park, near Chinju in southern Korea. And even while the Ostrowskis continue to talk almost daily with him and plan for his college education, this week they are filing a multi-million-dollar suit against New Beginnings and its Korean partner, charging the agencies with negligence, breach of contract, and fraud for allowing them to adopt a child they claim the agencies knew from the beginning was not the orphan they'd been assured he was.

THOUSANDS OF FOREIGN-BORN children are adopted by American parents each year, and experts say most of these adoptions go smoothly as once-abandoned children and their newfound parents cleave together to become a family. Foreign-adoption horror stories, the ones that make the news, are the exceptions to the rule. Mentally impaired kids—those suffering from fetal alcohol syndrome or those with catastrophic emotional damage—are palmed off on eager would-be parents whose love and financial resources are quickly tapped out. Every year, a handful of parents of these difficult and sometimes dangerous children essentially throw up their hands and return their adopted children to the care of strangers. Officials at New Beginnings insist that is what happened with the Ostrowskis.

"From our records of our counseling sessions with the Ostrowskis before they returned Chad to Korea, it was clear that their intention was to sever ties with their son," says Tim Sutfin, executive director of New Beginnings. "Once they took Chad back to Korea, they took his passport and his green card in order to ensure he never came back."

The Ostrowskis angrily deny that assertion. They say they allowed Ki Joon Park to take back his son in order to give the boy a chance to live the life he ought to have had all along—not as Chad Ostrowski but as Yong Seong Park.

"People ask me, how could you give up your son," says John Ostrowski, wiping away tears. "But they don't understand. We love Chad. We felt we had to act to save his life. Any parent would have done it."

JOHN AND ANNE MARIE OSTROWSKI SEEM like the kind of well-to-do, good-looking couple you'd find on the sidelines of a suburban soccer game. They live in a big wood-frame house on a tailored country lane in the heart of post-and-rail northern Westchester County—a place where bridle paths can be better maintained than back roads. Theirs is one of the newer homes on a subdivided estate; it's spacious and light and modern, surrounded by manicured beds of perennials and dogwood, apple, and plum trees—gardening is Anne Marie's passion. Tall and solid, John Ostrowski speaks with the steady deliberation of a man who knows his mind. After 22 years of marriage, John still inclines toward his wife when they talk, and there is something about the Ostrowskis that makes you think of two teenagers on a date.

John has made a good living as the operations director of a New Jersey–based real-estate trust. Throughout the house there are snapshots of the family on the beach during their annual vacation in Cape May, from winter trips to the Caribbean, of Chad and John II with Mickey during one of the family's eight trips to Disney World. In most of the pictures, Anne Marie, then an executive at Marine Midland bank in Rockland County, looks tanned, happy, and slightly hassled, like any mother of two on vacation. John II has a carefree smile. As a boy, Chad also grinned at the camera. Later on, he would only scowl, typically adolescent and moody. The Ostrowskis' photo album reflects an average family. But Anne Marie knows that those pictures tell only a small part of the truth about their life.

It was 1989, a decade since their first son was born, and Anne Marie, in her mid-thirties, found she could not get pregnant again. After a few bruising attempts at in-vitro fertilization, the Ostrowskis decided to adopt. Anne Marie herself had grown up in foster homes and had thrived. Maybe it was her destiny, she reasoned then, to become a life raft for other children without parents. She dreamed of a large family, maybe five kids in all. But she and John agreed to start off slowly, with a baby and maybe a 6-year-old. They opted for an overseas adoption—and paid New Beginnings some $9,000 to find their first child.

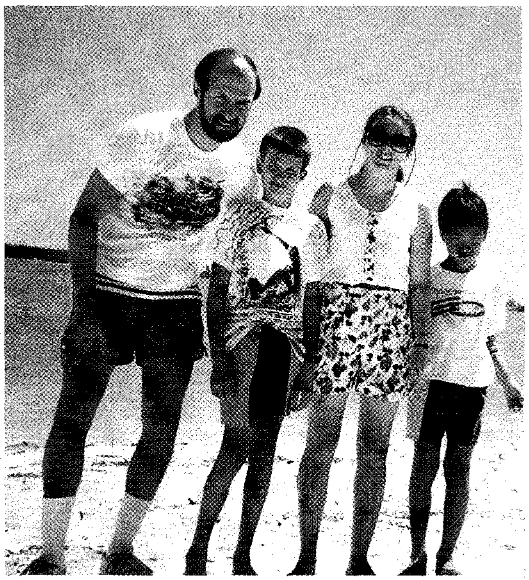
The caseworker at New Beginnings, Anne Marie says, showed her pictures of Chad—then 7—and promised that if the placement worked out, an infant would quickly follow.

From the first weeks they spent together, Anne Marie and John could tell Chad was very bright. He picked up English quickly, excelled at math, and became passionate about basketball and running. He could almost keep up with John II when they biked around the neighborhood.

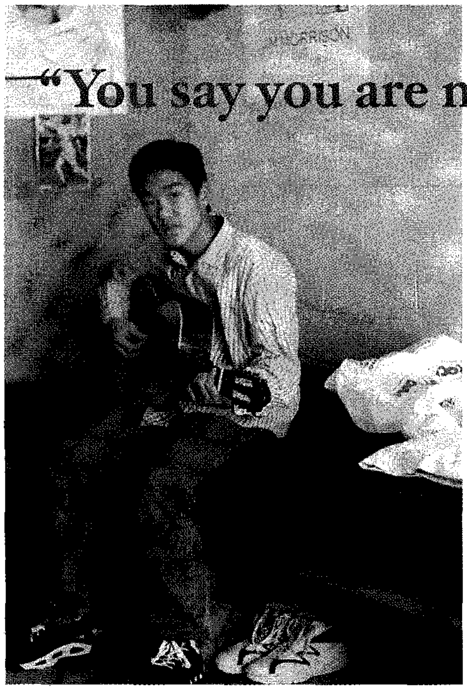
But from the outset, Anne Marie recalls, Chad seemed emotionally withdrawn. He could not respond to loving words or small gestures of affection. He could not talk about his feelings. He had a hard time striking up friendships with other children. Even as a small boy, he seemed determined to keep his feelings to himself.

When Chad did talk, it was about his childhood in Korea. He told his American parents that before he was taken to the orphanage, he lived with his father's mean girlfriend. His father would visit, laden with gifts of clothes and toys. After he left, the furious girlfriend would break the toys and throw away the clothes. During his first Christmas with the Ostrowskis, Chad happily tore through the wrappings on his presents. A few hours later, John found the presents in the trash.

"I won't play with them, they're broken," Chad said, his boyish features puckered in an angry scowl.



Family ties: Above, John, John II, Anne Marie, and Chad in Florida; opposite, from top, Chad soon after arriving in the U.S., playing guitar at a Connecticut boarding school, skiing in Vermont, and with friends at summer camp.



Troubled by these revelations, Anne Marie and John called New Beginnings. The caseworker dismissed Chad's claims as "pure fantasy," Anne Marie recalls, but promised to research Chad's history with Eastern Child Welfare Society, the Korean agency. The news from Korea was sobering: The Ostrowskis were told that Chad had been badly neglected as a small boy; while his mother was at work, Chad had roamed the streets, fending for himself until she returned at the end of the day. The Ostrowskis say the news only made them love him more. They also became fiercely protective of him.

"He had been a street kid," says Anne Marie. "He'd made himself tough just to survive. And I was ready to deal with it. After all, healing takes time."

While Anne Marie spoke to Chad about the importance of love and trust in their family, Chad responded with memories of his father. He was a towering man, Chad remembered, who'd taught him math on an abacus. Although family circumstances had forced Chad to stay with his grandmother and aunt, he remembered that more than once he'd run away to be with his father. Oddly, Chad never talked about his mother.

> **"You say you are my family, but I already have a family,"** Chad said. "I have a father, brothers, and sisters in Korea. My father loves me, and I want to know what happened to him."

Eastern had sent Anne Marie a picture of Chad taken at the orphanage. A scowling Chad is holding an identity card bearing what the Ostrowskis were told was Chad's Korean name, Yong Seong Kang.

"He hated that picture," says Anne Marie. "He told me his name was Park, not Kang, but they made him hold that card anyway. The day that picture was taken, Chad said, they took away his real name, along with his father's business card and a prized denim jacket that his father had given him."

Anne Marie called the caseworker again. This time, word came back from Korea that the man Chad thought was his father was a married boyfriend of his mother. "He would struggle with these memories, trying to piece them together," Anne Marie remembers.

The Ostrowskis assured Chad that in time they would help him get the answers he needed. For now, they urged him to build emotional connections to his new brother, his schoolmates, his community. Slowly Chad's memories of his old life began to fade. But the fissures never completely closed. Although his grades were good, he had few friends, and in the nearly all-white environs, he was an outsider.

EVENTUALLY, HE STARTED ACTING like one. Some of his teachers wrote him off as a troublemaker. The Ostrowskis' idyllic life began to turn upside down. Anne Marie was on the telephone constantly from her office, mediating, soothing, trying to manage an increasingly chaotic household. Her parish priest suggested sending Chad to a local Catholic school, where classes were smaller. But while he did very well academically, he became increasingly disruptive. He would bully kids who were smaller and meeker. Other parents began to complain. Teachers caught him lying needlessly. After a few months, Chad was expelled. "It shook my faith," recalls Anne Marie. "I didn't know what to do. I was super-stressed at work. Weekends were a nightmare. Chad wasn't getting any better."

John II says it wasn't all bad. He remembers sprawling with his brother in the den, watching videos, sharing English-muffin pizzas and soda.

"At first when he got into fights, I defended him," says John II, now 20 years old and a student at SUNY New Paltz. "I'd tell my mother, 'Give him the benefit of the doubt. You don't know how rough other kids can be.' "

But Chad was soon expelled from another parochial school after joining a ring of runty robbers to steal money from the teachers' cabinet.

The family had moved to a bigger house in a more affluent neighborhood, and Chad entered eighth grade at John Jay Middle School, midway between Katonah and Lewisboro. Anne Marie knew they were running out of options. By then, she had quit her job at the bank and made Chad her full-time occupation.

"I became obsessed with him," she recalls. All the attention seemed to finally pay off. In early adolescence, Chad began to blossom. For the first time, he formed real friendships: Chad, Aaron, and Phil—three boys from the same neighborhood—became an inseparable trio. They caddied together at Waccabuc Country Club, watched videos, and just hung out at Phil's house and talked. As always, Chad excelled in academics, tackling test after test like a competitive sport. He also discovered music, playing guitar with a garage band, and developed a love of drawing. He usually signed his delicately rendered illustrations Yong Seong Park.

Yet the emotional thaw his parents prayed for never came. Chad was still unable to express love, even warmth, for his adoptive parents. "It was like I had these words in my head," he says of that time. "I knew what they were, but I could never, never say them. They just wouldn't come out."

Instead, he raged at the Ostrowskis, especially his father and brother, with an inchoate frustration. The handyman was frequently at the house, repairing a window sill or a door frame broken during a physical confrontation between Chad and his brother. Still, Anne Marie defended him.

"I didn't want him to fail," said Anne Marie. "I would be constantly mediating between him and the rest of the world. My husband became bitter. He would say, 'You know, you have other family besides Chad.' "

In the winter of 1995, Anne Marie, always policing her son, picked him up after school and was driving him home past snow-covered pastures and well-tended horse barns. "I said, 'Chad, you're doing so well. You're on the high-honor roll, you have friends, but still you don't seem happy.' " Chad watched Anne Marie for a while as she drove, unable to speak. Then he did. "I can't be happy," he said quietly, "until I know what happened to my real father."

That February, Anne Marie wrote another letter to the adoption agency, asking for help. Three months later, the agency in Korea responded. A mistake *had* been made. The woman the agency thought was Chad's mother was not. They had located Chad's father, now a ginseng salesman in Chinju, and he missed his son terribly. The agency refused to include the father's address but agreed to act as a go-between for the families. A price list for forwarding and translating letters was enclosed.

"It was unbelievable, a bombshell," says John. "For five years, we had begged for information, only to be told that Chad's memories were wrong. Now it turns out they were right. What could we do?"

Anne Marie sets her mouth with anger when she talks about that day. "A child is not a rubber ball that you can reshape."

Tim Sutfin understands the Ostrowskis' anger. But, he says, according to his records, Chad's father was willing to give him up but had left the task to his girlfriend. It was the girlfriend, Sutfin claims, not Eastern or New Beginnings, who gave Chad's last name as Kang instead of Park. Both agencies took her word over that of the 7-year-old child.

FOR CHAD, THE NEWS WAS ALL THE proof he needed. He quickly wrote a letter, in English: "Dear Dad," he wrote, "this is your son, Yong Seong." He told his long-lost father about his sports activities and asked about his brothers and sisters. After a few months, he got back a carefully worded letter from his sister. At the time of his adoption, the family had been scattered, she explained. "Don't resent your father for what he did," she wrote. "We will always be family. But stay in the U.S. and get a good education."

For the Ostrowskis, those letters marked the beginning of Chad's plunge into darkness. The fighting at home veered out of control. Punished, he would be sent to his room, where he would systematically vandalize his bedroom furniture. He punched his walls so hard they were dented.

"I share a child with a Korean man," sa

Ostrowski, bewildered and amused. "I'm not married to him, and he speaks no English, but we share a child."

"One time I woke up from a nap to hear Chad pulling down his bookshelves, throwing chairs at the wall," recalls John II. "My mother had gone into his room, and he was screaming, 'Don't tell me what to do! You are not my real mother.' I put my pillow over my head and thought, 'I can't believe this is my life.' "

Between imbroglios, Chad would try to come up with practical, if adolescent, solutions to his inner turmoil. If he improved his behavior, would Anne Marie and John let him become a foreign-exchange student? Would they let him spend a year in Korea?

"We'd tell him if his behavior improved, we would work out a way for him to return," Anne Marie says. "He would try not to make mistakes, but it was almost like he couldn't help it."

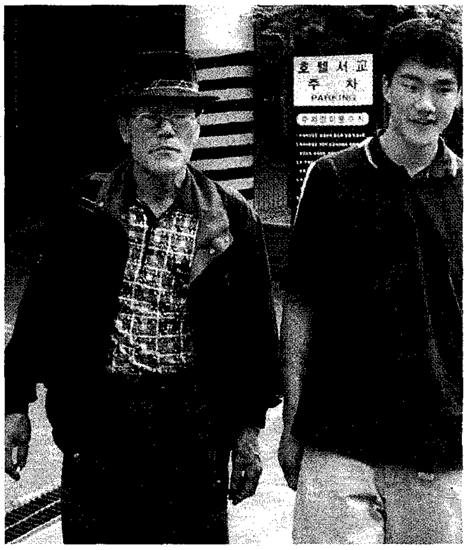
But the "mistakes" grew more frequent and more serious. They worried that Chad was stealing money after he brought home an expensive guitar, valuable comic books, and stacks of CDs. He hot-wired a neighbor's boat and returned it to its slip with much of its equipment ruined. A few times he ended a violent family fight by running away.

"I always had these questions in my mind. My family was on the other side of the world. It brought me down," says Chad. "I didn't try to get in trouble. But somehow I needed to make myself feel better."

The Ostrowskis enrolled Chad at an exclusive boarding school in northern Connecticut. Just as they were drawing a sigh of relief, the school called. Chad had put his hand through a plate-glass window, cutting himself from wrist to elbow. By Halloween, he had run away and was expelled. They enrolled him in a public high school, but he was suspended after three days. The psychologist he was seeing then told Chad's parents their son was talking about suicide.

"I thought about it a lot," said Chad, with chilling calmness. "But I just couldn't bring myself to do it."

Chad would tell them—often at the top of his voice—that he needed his father in Korea. After one blistering fight, Chad slammed the door of his bedroom and shouted words at his parents they will always remember.



"You're not my parents," he screamed. "You wanted a son, and people were willing to sell me and you bought me." By this time, it seemed to the Ostrowskis that their decision to adopt Chad was all wrong. "We knew we had to do something. We had to fix this terrible thing," says John. "We didn't know if bringing him back to Korea would help, but we had so few options."

Almost ten years after they were united that day at JFK airport, the Ostrowskis told New Beginnings they wanted to take Chad home. The agency flatly rejected the suggestion. John hired a lawyer and began a series of negotiations to get Chad repatriated. After being contacted by the Ostrowskis' lawyer, New Beginnings came up with a distant relative of Chad's in Dallas and suggested they send their son there.

Another world: Clockwise from top, Chad sitting between his biological father, Ki Joon Park, and the Ostrowskis; with his nephew, sister, and brother; and with Ki Joon Park at their reunion.

"In our opinion, returning him to Korea was too drastic a measure," said Sutfin.

"It was so frustrating. They didn't seem to get it. The point was not to send Chad away; the point was to give him back his father," John said.

In February, Chad got in a fight so bad his opponent's father threatened to press assault charges. Anne Marie no longer trusted him to be in the house alone. His grandmother refused to be alone with Chad after they'd had a screaming argument. To compound matters, he was smoking pot and drinking.

"I was afraid for my parents," says John II. "Afraid that he might hurt them."

LAST APRIL, ANNE MARIE, JOHN, AND Chad boarded a plane for Korea. Not even Chad's grandparents knew they were going. He left his books and sports jersey in his locker at school, and his beloved guitar at home in Westchester. Officials at Eastern were aware the Ostrowskis were coming to reunite Chad with his father but had promised them nothing. The Ostrowskis left a folder of documents with their congresswoman, Sue Kelly, and a lawyer in New York, in case they ran afoul of Korean immigration officials.

"We simply didn't know what was going to happen," said John. Maybe Chad's biological father would turn out to be inept, or cruel or criminal. Maybe a short visit would change Chad's mind. "But we had to do something."

On their second day in Korea, the director of Eastern met John and Anne Marie without Chad and did his best to dissuade them.

"The director said, 'Don't leave him here, there is money in the U.S.,' " John recalls with disgust. "I said, 'This is a child, not a commodity.' "

That afternoon, the agency finally produced Ki Joon Park, a small man with a weathered face carrying a crushed fedora. The Ostrowskis and Ki Joon Park sat staring at each other in an airless room, unable to communicate, while Eastern officials supplied spotty translation.

"They took advantage of us because we didn't know the language," said Anne Marie. Ki Joon Park seemed nervous and listened passively, with downcast eyes, as Eastern officials argued with him. But on one point Ki Joon was clear—he wanted to sign the hastily drawn legal document the Ostrowskis had brought. With the stroke of a black pen, Ki Joon reclaimed his son.

The Ostrowskis and Ki Joon decided to leave Eastern and the hectoring officials and reconvene, with Chad, at a nearby restaurant. John, Anne Marie, and Chad were ushered into the private room upstairs. There they were greeted by the entire Park family—Ki Joon, along with Chad's brother, sister, aunt, and niece. Ki Joon Park struggled to his feet. Chad's biological father, the "towering" figure in Chad's memory, stood a head shorter than his fully grown son. The resemblance between them was unmistakable. Park began sobbing, hugging Chad and hanging on his arm. Chad stood frozen.

"It was surreal," says Chad. "I was being pulled in two directions. Pulled apart."

From the look on Ki Joon Park's face, Anne Marie Ostrowski knew in a flash she would lose her son.

"I saw Chad was not reacting, and I realized that he was holding back for our sake," she recalls. "He looked at me, and I said, 'Chad, it's okay. It's your dad. You can have feelings for him. It won't hurt us. This is for you. You can love us both.' "

With many breaks for tears and translation, the boy's real story finally emerged. His mother died when Yong Seong Park was an infant. His father, destitute and mourning, left him, the youngest family member, with the boy's aunt, grandmother, and eventually a girlfriend, who mistreated Yong Seong. She eventually brought him to Eastern, which provides children to adoptive parents overseas. She convinced Ki Joon Park that the boy would be better off. Two days later, though, Ki Joon Park says, he changed his mind and tried to get his son back from the agency. Eastern apparently had no record of a little boy named Yong Seong Park, only Yong Seong Kang. Not realizing that his son's identity had been obliterated, Ki Joon Park continued to register him on the national rolls, hoping the boy would find his way back. Over and over, Ki Joon thanked the Ostrowskis and apologized for giving up a son he'd never stopped loving.

"We had terrible doubts about what we were doing," says John. "But seeing Chad and Ki Joon together erased our doubts. We saw the boy we hadn't seen in years."

TODAY, CHAD LIVES IN A REMOTE part of Korea. He is struggling to relearn the language and misses his American friends. Every morning, he takes a fifteen-minute bus ride to Chinju, a city of about 25,000. At school, he is expected to learn his lessons by rote, and his teachers aren't afraid to dole out slaps and punches to lazy students.

If Ki Joon drives the family one and a half hours to Pusan, Korea's second-largest city, they can gorge on Pizza Hut and Popeye's chicken. At home, the American food Chad cooks, like spaghetti and meatballs, baffles his family. He is taking guitar lessons and Tae Kwon Do. Recently, he has asked Anne Marie to send him a personal computer and a care package including grated Parmesan cheese, spices, and an Italian cookbook. He hopes to attend college in the U.S., but he is no longer Chad Ostrowski. To get a visa here, he will have to resolve his legal identity and probably will have to serve three years in the Korean military.

(continued on page 121)

Reunion dues:
Stein, Harry, Destri, and Burke.

Photograph by Chris Floyd

Time Is Nigh

They're not the kind of band to give up just like that—oh, no. Seventeen years on, Blondie pick up where they left off: squabbling and, perhaps, hit-bound. **By Ethan Smith**

HUDDLED AROUND A LOW, NARROW COFFEE table in a Chelsea rehearsal studio, four members of Blondie are discussing their first album in nearly two decades. "One of the reasons it's called *No Exit,*" says drummer Clem Burke, "is because there's a play—by Jean-Paul Sartre? That's basically what it's like to be in a band."

Hell is . . . other musicians?

"Yeah, exactly. Same as any group of people you're gonna be involved with."

Slouched improbably deep into a lumpy sofa, guitarist Chris Stein adds, "And the image of being trapped in a situation, but the door is open."

"I don't think the door is open in the play," Burke replies. "I really don't."

Keyboardist Jimmy Destri gets off the couch and stretches supine on the concrete floor. "Isn't it open throughout the play?" he asks wearily.

"It's not open," snaps Burke.

"They never *try* the door!" moans Stein. "That's the *idea*!"

"They try it," insists Burke.

Perched with one leg tucked under her on a folding plastic chair is Deborah Harry, the lead singer and Stein's ex-girlfriend. The windowless studio is chilly enough that she's wearing a coat; in lieu of comment, she wraps her hands more snugly around the paper cup of soup she's clutching. If her bandmates would let her get a word in, Harry might tell them that they're both right, sort of: Garcin and his fellow lost souls find the door to their own windowless pit locked at one point, open at another. But why bother? Like the endless conversational torment of Sartre's play, the old bandmates' bickering could never be brought to a pat resolution. Who wrote the melody to the new CD's jazzy "Boom Boom in the Zoom Zoom Room"—Harry or Burke? Is raising kids vegan a form of child abuse? Yuppies in TriBeCa: good or bad? Legitimate questions, all worthy of—and receiving—passionate debate.

UNLIKE SARTRE'S CHARACTERS, HARRY, STEIN & CO. ACTUally escaped one another's company seventeen years ago, though not entirely voluntarily. Having got their start on the same mid-seventies CBGB–Max's Kansas City circuit as the Ramones and Talking Heads, Blondie achieved that rarest of music-world balances, credibility and commercial success. Harry was an original—girl-group sweet and East Village tough. Between 1978 and 1982, Blondie's blend of punk, pop, and New Wave landed them four No. 1 singles.

But enough mishaps and infighting to fill a season's worth of *Behind the Music* episodes ended the band. "By the time we got to *The Hunter,*" says ex-bassist Nigel Harrison, referring to their sixth album, which tanked, "it was one big nervous breakdown." Shortly after the group disbanded, a more serious problem arose: Stein's entire body broke out in sores as he grew thinner and thinner. What first appeared to be AIDS turned out to be pemphigus, a rare hereditary disease triggered by stress.

Lately, band members have attributed their breakup to the disease—which eventually went into remission, as did Stein's relationship with Harry. In reality, Stein now concedes, things happened the other way around: The pemphigus was set off by "the band breaking up, and all the bad business deals, and spending five years straight on the road, and doing lots of drugs. I burned myself out." Stein married briefly; Harry stayed single, pursued a solo career, and has acted in a few films. Living comfortably if not lavishly off the still-healthy sales of Blondie's back catalogue, Burke, Destri, and Stein worked as session musicians and producers. Harrison spent eight years as an A&R executive at Interscope. All but Burke (who lives in L.A.) have stayed in New York.

The band began considering a reunion three years ago ("We have this legacy we can cash in on," Harry has remarked. "We'd be stupid if we didn't"). After rehearsals and a recording session involving Harrison, disagreements arose over new material—leading to the pared-down lineup heard on *No Exit.* Harrison and guitarist Frank Infante say they were left out unfairly. Stein disagrees: "Nigel didn't really want to do it. I don't think that's anything too litigious to say." Maybe not. But the two ousted musicians have filed suit over the reunion's legitimacy—and the profits involved.

"Maria," the first single, is getting decent airplay, but the album sounds as though time had stopped in 1982, when the band was on creative autopilot. It's eclectic in the way all Blondie albums have been: There's the reggae song, the disco-ish number, the charmingly mushy ballad. The title track even re-creates Blondie's most singular hit: Like "Rapture," "No Exit" features a rap showdown between Harry and a guest rhymer, this time Coolio.

No Exit hits stores February 23, the day the band plays an invitation-only concert at Town Hall. A brief warm-up tour in Europe was a sellout, and "Maria" debuted at No. 1 in England. "The shows have been great," says Burke. "I think we're communicating better than ever onstage. What do you guys think?" The room is silent. Destri, still on his back, covers his eyes with his forearm. "The interview environment is a little less than ideal sometimes," Burke notes.

The muffled but insistent roar of another band down the hall fills the room. "These guys are really good, this band," Burke says.

Harry glances up: "It sounds like a tape!"

"I know," replies Burke. "It's good."

Stein chimes in: "I don't know. I don't think it's a tape."

"I think that's what it is," says Harry, putting her soup down. "There's not enough movement."

"Not enough low-end, rock-the-room stuff," adds Burke.

"That's 'cause the fuckin' door's closed!" erupts Stein.

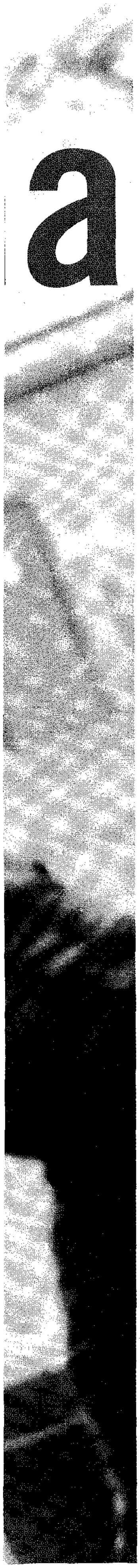
The music grows louder. "This sounds live now," says Harry.

"Yeah," Burke agrees. "It was a tape before."

"Nonsense!" says Stein. "You guys are so dense, I can't believe it! They have the door open now!"

Not that anybody's going anywhere. ▬

Win, P



ace, Snow

Far from Saratoga and Churchill Downs—but right here in South Ozone Park—thousands of hard-core horse players routinely brave the elements for a fix of winter racing at Aqueduct.

By Mark Jacobson

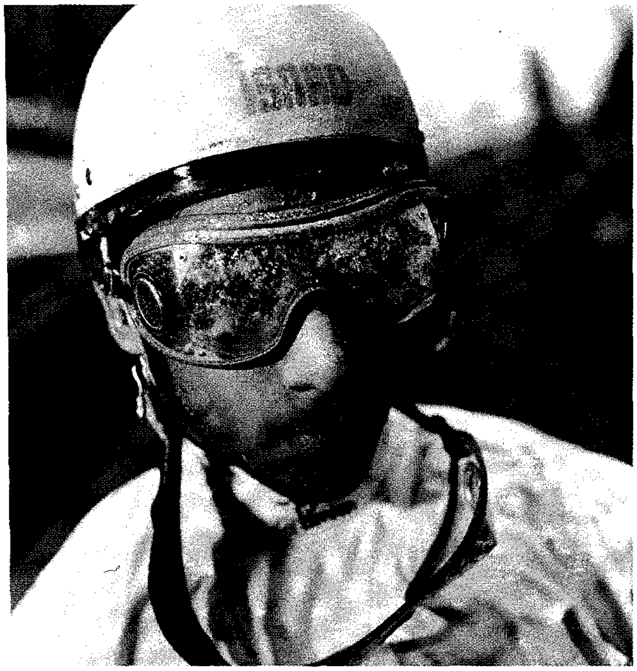
IT IS ONE OF THE GREAT MOMENTS IN AMERICAN SPORT. ON THE FIRST Saturday in May, as the first potential champion steps upon the hallowed race course, the band strikes up "My Old Kentucky Home." Then 100,000 people, their mint juleps raised in tribute, sing along and there's not a dry eye in the place, even among the frat boys. But this was not the first Saturday in May. It was the second Friday in January, and Churchill Downs' fabled twin spires were replaced by a windswept vista of the Kennedy airport long-term-parking lot beyond the cyclone fence of Aqueduct Race Track, in South Ozone Park, Queens. And when the hoof of the first decided non-champion touched the Big A's winterized "inner dirt track," a man named Delroy, a night watchman of the Rastafarian faith, one of the 3,000 or so hard-core horse players to show up on this snowy, subfreezing day, broke into song.

"Play that funky music, white boy!" Delroy sang, his lone, gloom-cutting falsetto calculated to spur on C. C. Lopez, rider of one Red Hunt, a 22-to-1 shot who was making his racetrack debut. It didn't help. Moments later, icicles hanging from his dreadlocks, Delroy stood squinting into the cold mist, trying to make out which of the late-arriving horses was Red Hunt, 0-for-1 lifetime.

It is unlikely that the seventeenth-century English aristocracy had Aqueduct winter racing in mind when they imported those three Arabian, Turk, and Barb stallions—stock from which all Thoroughbreds are said to be descended. Begun in the mid-1970s to keep gambling tax dollars pumping year-round, winter racing has long provided a handy metaphor for the 50-odd-year decline of the erstwhile Sport of Kings. Indeed, with its slew of six-furlong races, its bowls of clamless clam chowder ladled out from steaming steel vats, and the same daily "faces"—Rastas, Chinese waiters, Korean War vets on disability, etc.—serial

Horse, players: Right, trainer Gasper Moschera with jockey Ariel Smith; left, one of Moschera's steeds.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MARC ASNIN/SABA



Ice men: **Left to right, Smith in frosted goggles; racing fans bundled against the elements; Gasper preparing his charge for the track; horse, jockey, and windchill; rare winter railbirds eyeing their picks.**

plunging at the $2-exacta windows, Aqueduct seems a perfect spot to divest one last grubstake before tottering off this mortal coil.

This is especially true when the heavy weather's rolling in off North Conduit Avenue, as it was so often early this year, when several dates were canceled because of unmerciful cold, rain, and snow. Even on so-called good days, "it's unbelievable," says the aforementioned jockey Lopez, a genial soul who has been piloting bloodline-deficient nags around the inner track for the better part of a decade. "You're out there in nothing but a leotard and a T-shirt. Your hands freeze, your feet freeze, your face freezes. The horse is going 40 miles an hour into a gale—what's the wind-chill on that?"

Given this general mise-en-scène, it is no wonder that Aqueduct and its quick-drying inner track (a tight-turned "bull-ring" notable for outrageous bias toward front-running "speed" horses) are almost universally eschewed by racing's fancier element. You won't find society owners like the Phippes, swank trainers like Bill Mott and Shug McGaughey, or top jocks like Jerry Bailey, Pat Day, and José Santos saddling paragons like Skip Away or Silver Charm amid the howling winds of the Aqueduct paddock. Most of these "connections" leave New York in November, choosing to pass the winter amid the more copacetic surroundings of Florida's Gulfstream Park or Santa Anita Park out in California. But no matter. There's a kind of purity at the Big A in winter, a monkish singularity of purpose. It is a prole-bound pre-TV world, full of arcane etiquette and schematized ways to wisdom.

"When the fat cats are away, the mice will play," Gasper Moschera says, standing in front of barn No. 56 on the nearby Belmont Park "backside" (take a right off Ruffian Road, to Seattle Slew Avenue, then onto Assault Road). It's six o'clock on a wretched winter morning; the roosters are screeching as if in pain, but Gasper's already on his second cup of coffee, just as he is every day, seven predawns per week. Horse trainers, the auteurs of the sport, usually hang shingles with their names (often gold-leafed) on the barns where their charges are stabled. But Gasper, who has won more races in New York than any other trainer for each of the past six years and who is generally known as the king of winter racing, puts on no such airs.

"Who needs your name all over the place?" Gasper, a rubbery-faced but still boyish-looking 56-year-old, demands to know in a reedy, insistent voice not totally removed from his Williamsburg upbringing. "Some guys . . . they have their initials on every stall. On every feed pail. D. WAYNE LUKAS, D. WAYNE LUKAS . . . over and over . . . it's like they're going to forget who they are. That's not me."

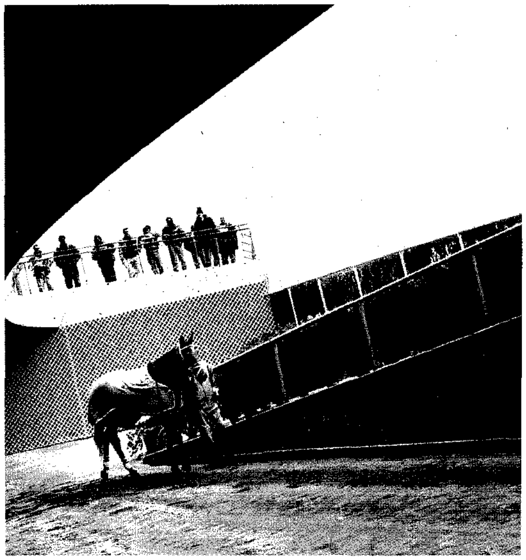
A former union carpenter, Gasper got into racing in 1976 after befriending some trainers who came into the carpet store he was running on Hempstead Turnpike. "I was a gambler, a horse player," he says with typical brusque charm. "You can learn a lot about horses from betting on them. Lose money, you learn." Mostly, Gasper says, "in these cheaper races, you go for spots. You know where the horse can win, understand his limits, don't overmatch him."

"I grew up betting at Aqueduct. I'm

So what if I'm cold? This is my money

This applies to trainers too, Gasper allows. "Look," he says, "I grew up betting at Aqueduct. I'm an Aqueduct guy. I know where I belong. My wife goes to Florida for the winter, but I stay here. Why would I want to go down there where there's too much competition just to get a suntan? I can sit under a lamp. When those heavy-head guys are away, everyone moves up. Here, I can win. I don't have a trust fund—I *have* to win to make a living. So what if I'm cold? This is my money time. You don't give up your money time."

PEOPLE SAY GASPER IS PROBABLY the sharpest "claiming trainer" in the history of winter racing (to guard against ringers, horses are entered in graded "claiming races"; if it's a $25,000 claimer, any horse in the race can be bought by another trainer for that price). The only trainer to match Gasper's success rate was the late Oscar Barrera, the eighties king of winter racing, who was known to claim a horse out of a $10,000 race, run him three days later for $100,000, and win. "But Oscar had the juice," Gasper cackles, in reference to the highly ambient track lore that Barrera's horses may have been a little, er, juiced up. Juiceless (or at least legally juiced), one of Gasper's $25,000 claims, the 8-year-old Shoop, has grossed more than $900,000 in earnings. Mr. Sinatra, picked up for



$75,000, has won close to $600,000. With his trainer's share of 10 percent, this adds up. Surprisingly, Gasper never spends much time looking at these horses. He'll make a $100,000 claim without ever laying (a close) eye on the animal. “Trainers who stand around rubbing their chins, looking at horses—they're just trying to impress some owner. This isn't a beauty contest. If it doesn't have a broken leg, you can't tell anything by looking.” He slaps his open *Racing Form*. “I look at this. How they run. That's all that matters.”

This said, most people say Moschera wins because his horses are happy, a fact that the trainer attributes to the winter weather. “The humans complain when it's ten degrees in the morning, but the horses think it's fine. They eat better, their coats grow long and sweet, they never get sick. The summer—when it's 100 or more in the barn, flies all around—that's what horses don't like . . . The most important thing in winter training is to keep them from breaking down. Don't make them do too much. Some trainers can't sleep at night unless they're working the horses all the time, pounding them on the frozen training track, as if that's going to help. Mostly we jog them around the barn, on soft wood shavings. The horses I have—they're pros, they've done this before. They don't need me to tell them what to do.”

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. You don't give up your money time.”

As befits a winter king, track notables come to Barn 56 to pay Gasper tribute. This morning, Steve Adika, a jockey agent, has arrived in his Lexus. Longtime rep for Eclipse prize winner Mike Smith, Adika, a roundish, jocular Israeli Sephardi with a Sydney Greenstreet squeeze-the-merchandise affect, has picked up the book for 16-year-old Ariel Smith, the current hot “bug” boy, or apprentice rider. “I got Smiths, all kinds Smiths, Smiths from cough drops, vanilla and chocolate Smiths,” proclaims the thickly accented Adika, noting that Ariel Smith, son of former New York winter rider Alfredo Smith, is one of the few black jockeys currently at the track. Beyond this, his being a winter bug (apprentices are given valuable weight allowances) taps into perhaps the single most enduring legend of the Aqueduct's inner track. It was here that bug boy Steve Cauthen, “the Kentucky Kid,” came out of nowhere to make his name, soon winning the 1978 Triple Crown aboard Affirmed. Gasper is impressed with the young Smith, giving him some of his best horses to ride. Still, he cannot resist hassling the ever-put-upon Adika about the imminent appearance at Aqueduct of another touted bug boy, the teenage Jeremy Beasley, who's been tearing things up in Texas and is represented by Drew Mollica, Adika's rival.

“Drew gave me a case of lobsters,” Moschera cajoles. “He gave me cake.”

“Gas-*per*! He might give you cake,” Adika frets. “But it is not the *good* cake! It is *day-old* cake! Gas-*per*! You cannot ride this Beas-lee. I beg of you . . . do not to ride this Beas-lee!”

A few hours later, the winds picking up, cold rain slanting in from the north, Gasper, his graying hair slicked back, Nautica jacket zipped tight, is in the utilitarian Aqueduct paddock, saddling Mr. Buffum for the sixth race. Snorting great clouds of breath into the winter mist, Mr. Buffum, 4-year-old offspring of the unaugust union between sire Obligato and dam Bitwa, is a typical Gasper success story: Claimed for $35,000 last summer at Saratoga, the horse has won three races in a row, including a $125,000 handicap. Today, as with many of the entries Gasper sends out these days, Mr. Buffum is the chalk, or favorite, first at 6-to-5, then at even money, now hammered down to 4-to-5.

“This horse has speed—keep him close, go for the lead if it's there, but he doesn't need to be in front,” Moschera calmly advises Ariel Smith, who listens attentively. Attired in a royal-blue silk shirt with gray crossing sashes, an electric-blue cap festooned with three pairs of maroon goggles on his head, the diminutive Smith is a riot of Max Ernst psychedelia amid the heathlike murk. It has been a big day for the bug boy; he's ridden two winners already. Plus, he just enrolled at Sewanhaka High in Elmont, Vinny Testaverde's alma mater. He plans on studying hard because even though he's currently “101 pounds, stripped,” when you're barely 16, “you never know how big you'll get.”

A MOMENT LATER, SAM THE BUGLER, who practices Clifford Brown riffs between races and got his job after the previous bugler hit the Pick 6, improvs on a Purcell theme. It's two minutes to post, but hardly any of the hard-core attendees inch closer in expectation. Although they qualify as (scruffy) urban heroes simply for showing up instead of betting at OTB (“Call us degenerates, see if we care,” says one player, identifying himself as Anthony the Greek Geek), few winter fans actually ever see a horse run in the flesh. They stay inside, at the Ruffian Teletheatre or in the Sunny Jim Room, and watch the races on TV monitors. In winter, the railbird is extinct at Aqueduct; only a few days ago, when it snowed four inches, the standing area adjacent to the track was a *(continued on page 134)*

BEST BETS

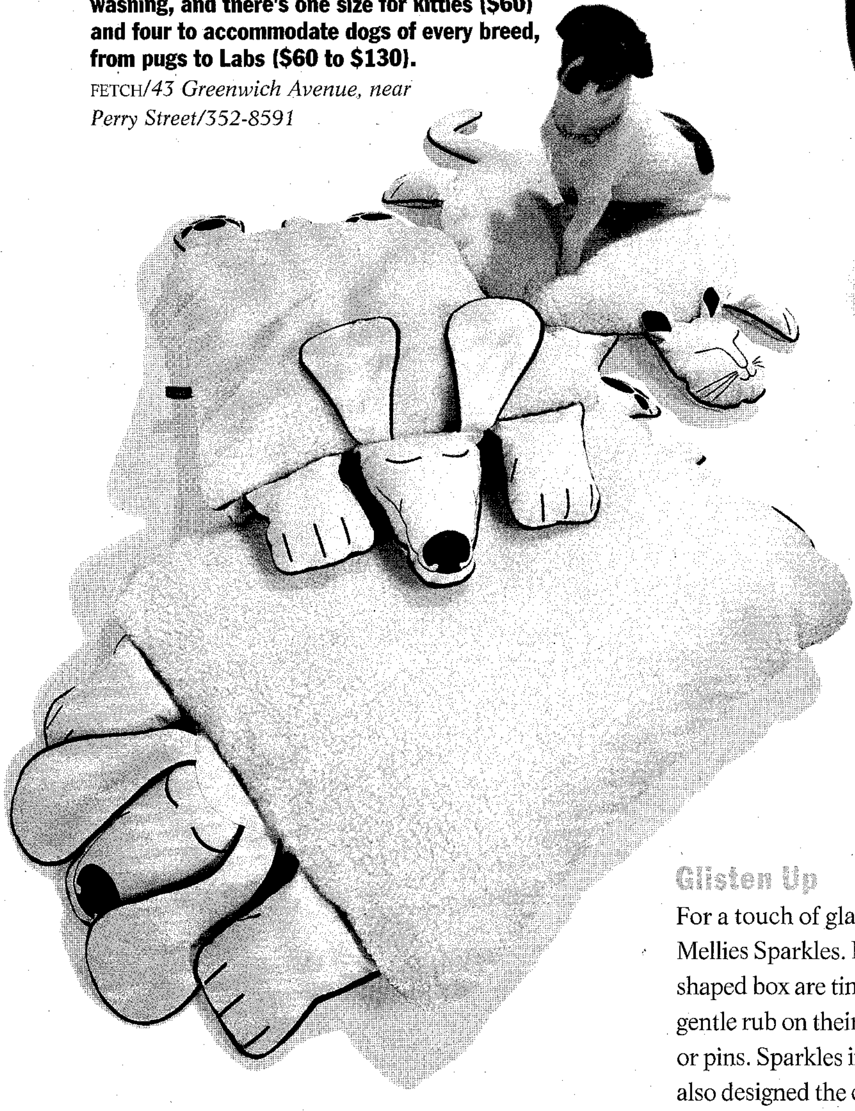
The best of all possible things to buy, see, and do in the best of all possible cities

BY CORKY POLLAN

Bedtime for Fido

Moisturizing shampoos, coat conditioners, paw balms, healing aromatherapies, breath fresheners—the list of pet-pampering products is mind-boggling. But what every cat and dog—and owner—really needs is a cozy bed, one so cozy it will keep man's best friends off his own. One such is Snugga Luvs theriomorphic cushion, which combines practicality with personality. The comfy cotton-fleece cover slips off for machine-washing, and there's one size for kitties ($60) and four to accommodate dogs of every breed, from pugs to Labs ($60 to $130).

FETCH/*43 Greenwich Avenue, near Perry Street/352-8591*



Glisten Up

For a touch of glam—even on bad-hair days—consider Mellies Sparkles. Nestled inside each little *faux*-velvet fruit-shaped box are tiny Austrian crystals that magically (with a gentle rub on their Velcro-ish backs) attach to hair, without clips or pins. Sparkles inventors Melody Kulp and David Reinstein also designed the cases and filled each one with seven to ten crystals in colors that range from sapphire to silver ($35).

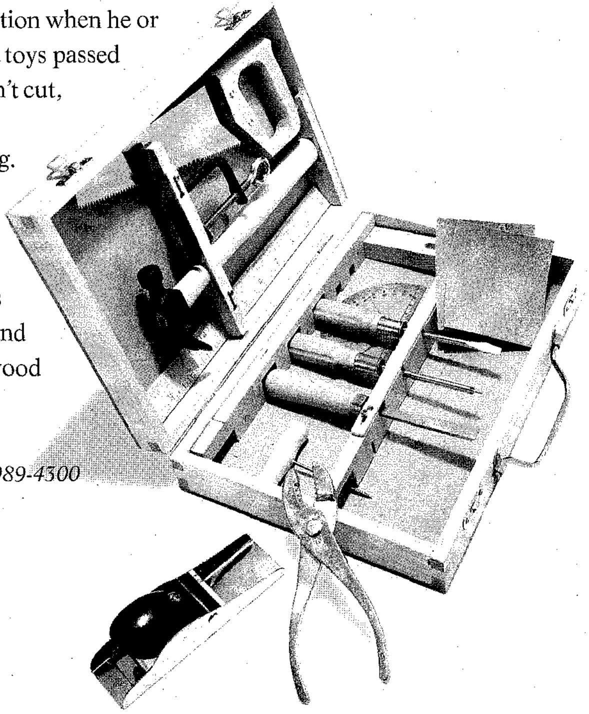
BARNEYS NEW YORK/*Seventh floor*

Photographs: clockwise from top right, Kenneth Chen (2); Josh McHugh; Steve Wisbauer (2); Michael Grimm.

Hammer Time

Imagine a child's frustration when he or she is given badly made toys passed off as tools: saws that can't cut, plastic hammers too lightweight for pounding. But now there's a finely crafted fourteen-piece kit sized for kids 8 years and older. Everything is made of wood or metal and comes in a handsome wood carrying case ($29.95).

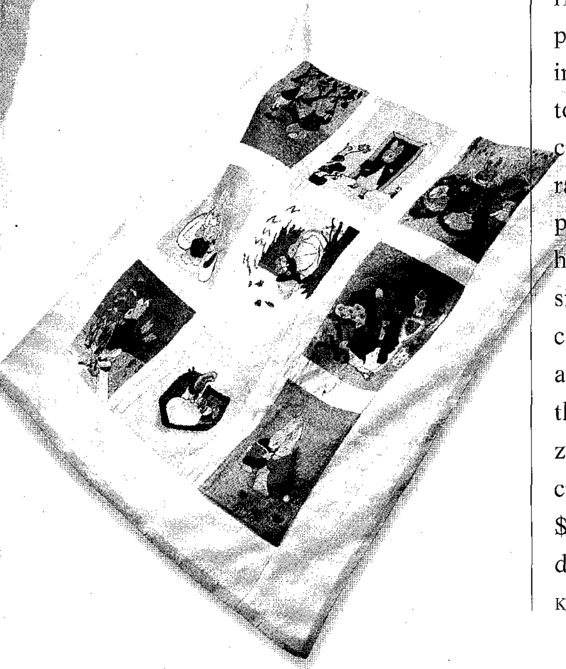
MXYPLYZYK/*125 Greenwich Avenue, near 13th Street/989-4300*

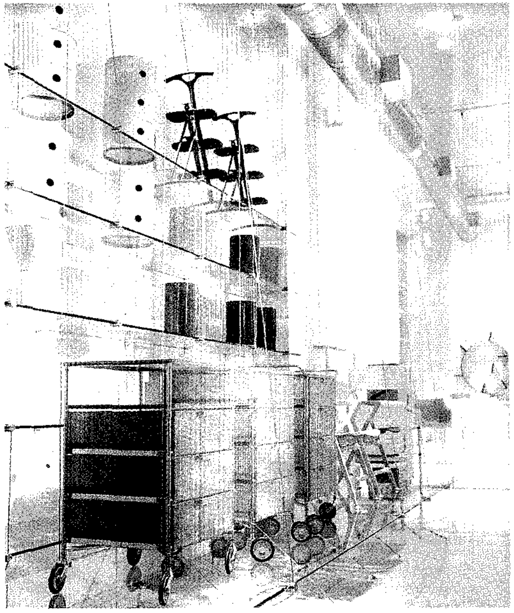


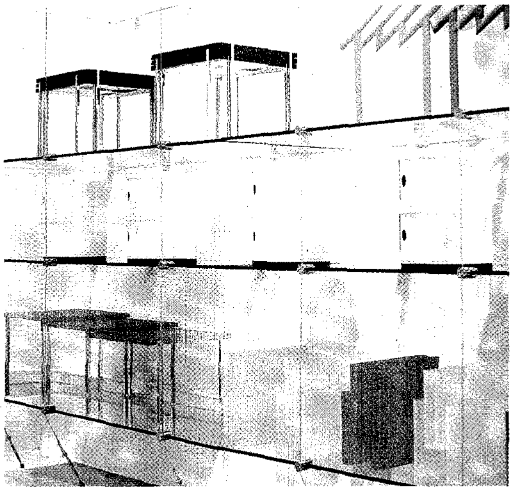
Rabbit Redux

Village Kidz, purveyor of hip clothing for kids, now also stocks hand-embroidered linens in its pint-size West Village spot. But these aren't *your* ordinary baby-pale crib sheets and pillowcases—they're bursting with vivid scenes from Beatrix Potter. So little ones can get cozy under their duvets while spending time with Peter Rabbit (from $34 for a pillow slip to $64 for a sheet to $210 for a duvet cover).

VILLAGE KIDZ/*3 Charles Street/807-8542.*







One Word: *Plastics*

Kartell was founded in the forties by Giulio Castelli—*a chemical engineer obsessed with* plastic who turned out accessories for car interiors. Today, this Milan-based company mass-produces plastic furniture of high design, and in its lofty new SoHo outpost New Yorkers get to see the full range of its products. The space, created by architect Ferruccio Laviani, is as radical as the objects on display: Sheets of suspended glass supported by steel cables flaunt homewares of intense color. The midair profusion includes Philippe Starck's Dr. No and Vico Magistretti's Maui chairs, Antonio Citterio and Oliver Löw's Mobil storage systems and their Tris tables, and Giotto Stoppino's magazine racks. (From $14 for an Enzo Mari pencil cup to $230 for Starck's La Marie chair to $516 for the Tris table to $1,891 for a six-drawer horizontal Mobil unit.)

KARTELL/*45 Greene Street/966-6665*

SMARTCITY

Follow Your Nose

Sniffing out truffles has never been easier.

BY PETER KAMINSKY

WHILE MANY PEOPLE HAVE A FEAR of flying, I would say an even higher percentage of food lovers have a fear of truffles: They're musky and strange, they're connected to pigs and dirt in some unpleasant way, in restaurants they're too expensive, and at home they're thought to require skills far beyond the average cook.

Okay, truffles are pricey—but so are opera tickets, an afternoon with the kids at Yankee Stadium, or a boxed CD collection of Bruce Springsteen. And right now, as it's truffle season at a number of restaurants in town, they would appear to be an eminently available—if not wonderfully affordable—indulgence. For a quick fix, **Trois Jean** (154 East 79th Street; 988-4858) has an $82 four-course prix fixe truffle dinner and a more extensive à la carte truffle menu featuring many rustic dishes of Provence and Gascony. At **Le Cirque** (455 Madison Avenue, at 50th Street; 303-7788) and **Restaurant Daniel** (60 East 65th Street; 288-0033), scallops black tie are usually specials ($36 at Le Cirque and $78 for a three-course prix fixe at Daniel); nearby, Susan Weaver at **Fifty Seven Fifty Seven** in the Four Seasons Hotel (57 East 57th Street; 758-5757) has a wild-mushroom terrine appetizer that is studded with truffle bits ($16). Christian Delouvrier at **Lespinasse** (2 East 55th Street; 339-6719) is currently making a sublime poached poularde with a truffle-and-foie-gras stuffing and a robust portion of truffle slices tucked under the poularde's skin ($74 for two); Charlie Palmer often serves a roast version of the same dish without the foie gras ($65 for the three-course prix fixe) at **Aureole** (34 East 61st Street; 319-1660). Over at **Jean Georges** (1 Central Park West; 299-3900), Jean-Georges Vongerichten is roasting a guinea hen breast with truffles, tossing them into his leek tart, and stewing them in a Jerusalem-artichoke soup for his special seven-course truffle menu ($220).

Aromatherapy: Tournedos Rossini at Trois Jean topped with sautéed foie gras, black truffles, and perigourdine sauce ($49).

But you should also know that if you can chop onions, you can prepare a truffle dish at home—as long as the truffle itself is high-quality. There are certainly truffles out there worthy of worship: In the ancient Provençal village of Richerenche, a truffle mass is held every winter in the local church. Black-robed Masters of the Truffle (William Rehnquist would not look out of place) put in a special appearance and pass an alms basket around the congregation. Parishioners toss precious truffles inside to honor Saint Anthony, who loved pigs (their truffle-snuffling skills are renowned) and is therefore held to be the patron saint of truffle hunters.

A summer dry spell translated into a thin crop of the flavorful fungi this year; truffles are currently fetching up to $500 a pound. Aroma—redolent of barnyard and bordello—is not the sole criterion by which a truffle may be judged. The first-time buyer must also beware of cheap imitations: Close relatives of the real black truffle (*Tuber melanosporum*) may smell good when harvested but tend to retreat when cooked or combined with other ingredients.

Nor can superficial appearance be your guide: Laurent Manrique, the talented New York–based Gascon chef, demonstrates this by slicing into a good truffle and a look-alike called a musqué. The white veins are sharper and more defined inside true black truffles. (But in truth, a layperson would have a hard time telling the minute differences between the two.)

That's why, if you're planning to try this at home, it would behoove you to start with a truffle that hails from a trusted source. **Plantin America**, of Weehawken (201-867-4590; www.plantin.com) is a reliable importer of black truffles, which usually can be bought fresh through March. The current price is approximately $500 the pound, with a minimum order of four ounces ($130). Too rich for your blood? **Citarella** (1313 Third Avenue, at 75th Street, and 2135 Broadway, at 75th Street; 874-0383 for both

Photographs by Andre Baranowski.

They may look like potatoes, but this fragrant bag of truffles is worth its weight in real Yukon gold.

stores) currently sells fresh black truffles by the ounce—$35.99 per. However, the best generally weigh no less than an ounce and a half. Truffles keep for a few days in the fridge if you place them in uncooked rice or wrap them in paper towels and store them in a Ziploc bag. But the longer they sit around, the less intense the flavor and the greater chance there is that they will develop mold (which can be cut out before preparation).

How, then, to treat a truffle? We asked Hervé Poron, France's leading exporter of truffles, and his wife, Margareth, to recommend a couple of simple, authentic Provençal recipes. Folks were eating these two dishes—a lettuce-shallot salad and a down-home purée of celery root with cream—back when truffles were still regarded as a lowly peasant staple.

Green-Lentil Salad With Black Truffles

Serves four.

1 pound green lentils, Dupuy brand preferred (available at most grocers)
2 ounces black truffles, in ¼-inch-thick slices
¼ cup olive oil, plus 2 tablespoons
1 teaspoon sea salt (sel de Guerande preferred)
2 tablespoons Xeres vinegar (or any good balsamic vinegar)
½ shallot, finely diced
3 cups loosely packed mâche
2 tablespoons chervil, finely chopped
Freshly ground black pepper

Boil the lentils in water following the directions on the box. While lentils are cooking, place truffles in a salad bowl, adding 2 tablespoons olive oil. Add salt. In a separate bowl, combine vinegar with shallots and remaining olive oil; pour over truffles. Add mâche and chervil; lightly toss. Season to taste with pepper.

Drain cooked lentils, and while they are still warm, lightly toss with the salad. Serve immediately.

Celery-Root Purée With Black Truffles

Serves four to six.

1 celery root (celeriac)
3 tablespoons crème fraîche or heavy cream
Salt and freshly ground white pepper
2 ounces black truffles, in ¼-inch-thick slices

Cut the celery root into large chunks and boil until fork-soft. Drain, purée in a food processor, and pulse in the crème fraîche gradually. Empty into a medium-size bowl. Season with salt and pepper; fold in truffles and serve.

EXPERT TESTIMONY

Name That Tune

Say you like to sing. In fact, say you *really* like to sing, so much so that you warble not just in the shower but on Broadway (winning two Tonys in the process). Say you're James Naughton, in which case this applies. Where do you go to get some recordings of the other greats of stage and screen? "I've been going to Colony Records (1619 Broadway, at 49th Street; 265-2050) for 25 years," says Naughton, "and they have a level of service you don't find at any of the other record stores." Now in its fiftieth year, Colony has provided plenty of show-tune addicts their fix for the obscure cast album. "People come in, they have a lyric to a song, they don't know who's done it, but they know 'love' is in the title," says owner Richard Turk of Colony's service-intensive approach. "We make sure they walk out with the song."

SAM GROBART

NAVIGATOR

Q: I have a formal event this weekend, but that all-purpose black dress from last season is passé, and trying to find another that fits just right has proved to be mission impossible. Any suggestions?

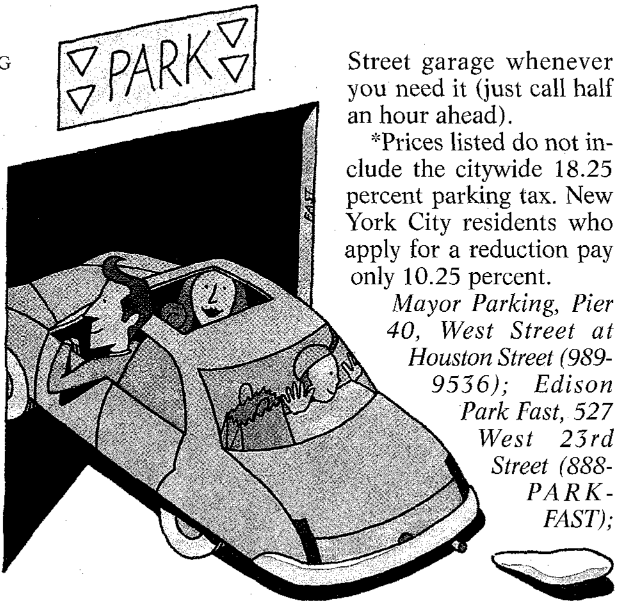
A: Yeah. Call it couture-to-go: designers who'll custom-make dresses in as little as a day, without sacrificing quality and style. These made-to-measure masters have tailors and a range of fabrics on the premises to ensure that your creation will be ready promptly, sans hefty price tag and rush fee. Rubin and Alik Singer's chic, minimalist Lower East Side atelier-shop (163 Orchard Street; 473-5922) has a wide range of styles, from Mugler-like sophisticated cocktail suits to avant-garde dresses in taffeta, chiffon, or silk, and this father-son team of third-generation designers has an eye for detail and fit that's attracted clients like Danielle Steel and Whoopi Goldberg. They'll deliver a dress in two or three days for $500 to $1,600, depending on fabric and style. Can't make it downtown? Stop by Ménage à Trois (799 Madison Avenue, near 67th Street; 396-2514). This attitude-free, family-run boutique has a plentiful selection of strappy, bias-cut satin and silk flowy gowns with understated elegance, and lace camisole tops with full skirts to mix and match. The designing threesome will even make a shawl to complete that *pour nuit* look and promise a gown in three days for $650 to $1,550. If you're really pressed for time, head to Pierre Garroudi (139 Thompson Street; 475-2333). He'll make a dress in 24 hours, guaranteed—just bring in a picture of your dream getup or choose from his own evening designs, and this downtown Edward Scissorhands will do his magic starting at $900.

ANNA RACHMANSKY

SALES & BARGAINS SHYAMA PATEL

Lots for Little

Park prospects: *When drive-to-the-Hamptons season approaches, you don't have to choose between your summer share and* **paying your car's rent.**



TIRED OF HAULING your beach baggage on the bus every summer weekend, but think it's too expensive to keep a car in town? Alternate-side-of-the-street is not Manhattan's only budget parking option: If you're willing to take a short hike to your car, you can save up to 75 percent on a garage. So whether you're splurging on a new convertible or working on your favorite uncle to lend you an old pickup for the summer, consider one of these safe, money-saving spots.

Downtown: **Mayor Parking**'s Houston Street parking pier is a good bet for downtown residents in search of indoor or outdoor space. A spot on the roof will set you back only $135* per month, and indoor spots are a deal at $161.

Chelsea: **Edison Park Fast**'s garage and outdoor annex are good options for Chelsea residents: Indoor spots are $186; outdoor ones are $165.

Midtown: On West 38th Street, an outdoor spot at **Central Parking System** (monitored by a 24-hour attendant) is a steal at $105 per month.

Uptown: More Than Parking has several inexpensive facilities on the West Side: at its **West 59th Street Garage**, an indoor spot is a mere $150 per month. Or, for even better deals, check out MTP's **Columbia Parking** location on West 125th Street, where an indoor spot is $135. Or, for $99 per month, MTP will store your vehicle in an indoor lot further uptown and deliver it to the 125th Street garage whenever you need it (just call half an hour ahead).

*Prices listed do not include the citywide 18.25 percent parking tax. New York City residents who apply for a reduction pay only 10.25 percent.

Mayor Parking, Pier 40, West Street at Houston Street (989-9536); Edison Park Fast, 527 West 23rd Street (888-PARK-FAST); Central Parking System, 541 West 38th Street (889-4444); MTP West 59th Street Garage, 540 West 59th Street (307-7886), and MTP Columbia Parking, 627 West 125th Street (280-7487).

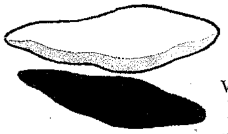
DO NOT PHONE: Send suggestions to Shyama Patel, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999, four weeks before the sale. Sales exclusive to "Sales & Bargains" and not previously advertised or published elsewhere will be given preference.

Picks of the Week

Barry Kieselstein-Cord's leather handbags with sterling-silver animal-shaped clasps are a society lady's best friends. At the sample sale, styles for day and evening, as well as the designer's collection of sterling-silver jewelry, belts, and bags, are about half off regular prices: from $150 for a belt (strap only) to $550 for a bag. *Parsons School of Design, 560 Seventh Ave., at 40th St.; A.E., M.C., V.; Wed. 1–6, Thurs. 9–6, Fri. 9–4; 2/24–2/26.*

Morgenthal-Frederics Opticians usually sells for $225–$500. Now the company is moving a ton of fashionable prescription and sunglasses styles to its SoHo shop and clearing it all out at 35 to 50 percent off. The sale includes frames from designers like Yamamoto, Armani, and Gaultier, as well as discontinued Morgenthal-Frederics private-label styles. A Gaultier frame, was $385, now $195; prescription lenses are 15 percent off with the purchase of any sale frame, and eye exams are an additional $60 to $100. *399 West Broadway (966-0099); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.–Fri. 11–8, Sat. till 7, Sun. noon–6; 2/22–3/3.*

Ruth Caplan's interior-design fabrics cover such swank spots as the Plaza Hotel and Bill Gates's home. No decorator? Head for the showroom sale, where overstock is available for up to 80 percent off the retail price: silk velvet is $30 per yard (retail $175); cotton damask is $25 per yard (retail $130), and trimmings are 50 to 70 percent off. *Fine Arts Building, 232 E. 59th St., fourth floor (826-3756); cash only; Mon.–Fri. 9–1; 2/22–2/26.*



D'Amico Foods' coffees have been favorites of Cobble Hill java lovers for more than 50 years. During its spring sale, D'Amico is not only selling most gourmet beans for 20 percent off (try the Colombian Supremo Dark, $18 for three pounds); the shop will also ship them free of charge (with a three-pound minimum). Gift packaging is available. *309 Court St., Brooklyn (718-875-5403); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.–Sat. 8–7; 2/22–3/31.* ■

ALWAYS A DEAL

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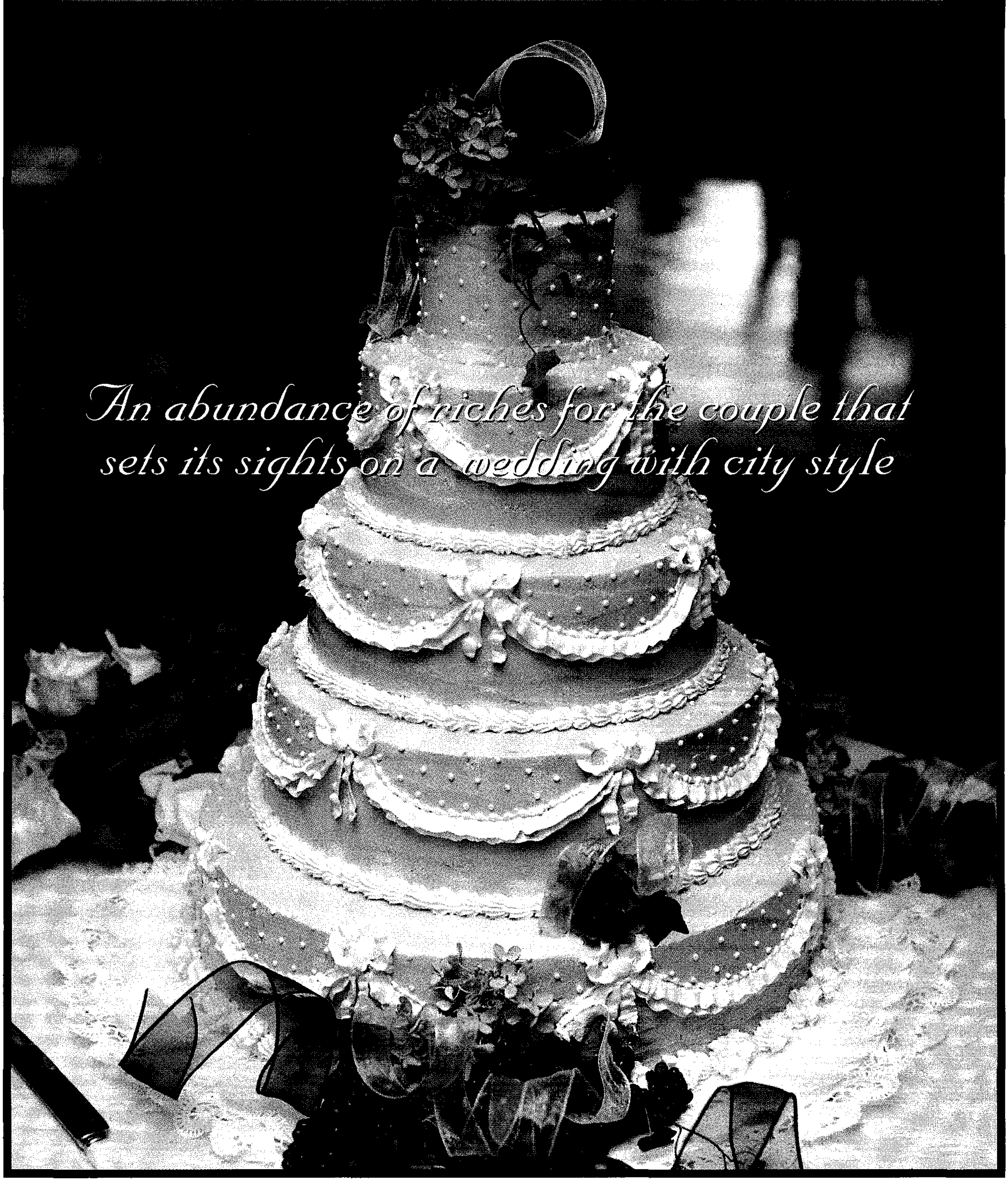
IF YOU'RE PRONE TO LEAVING ON your car lights but hate waiting around for a jump-start, consider investing $50 (plus $6 shipping) in Comtrad's **Auto Starter**. The rechargeable unit fits in a glove compartment, plugs into your car's cigarette lighter, and will replenish power in fifteen to twenty minutes. (It won't work on a battery that's completely dead, however, so don't think you've found a way around buying a new one every few years.) Auto Starter's also a handy portable power source for, say, cell phones and boom boxes. *Call 800-992-2966 to order.*

Illustration by Ingo Fast. Photograph courtesy of Morgenthal-Frederics Opticians.

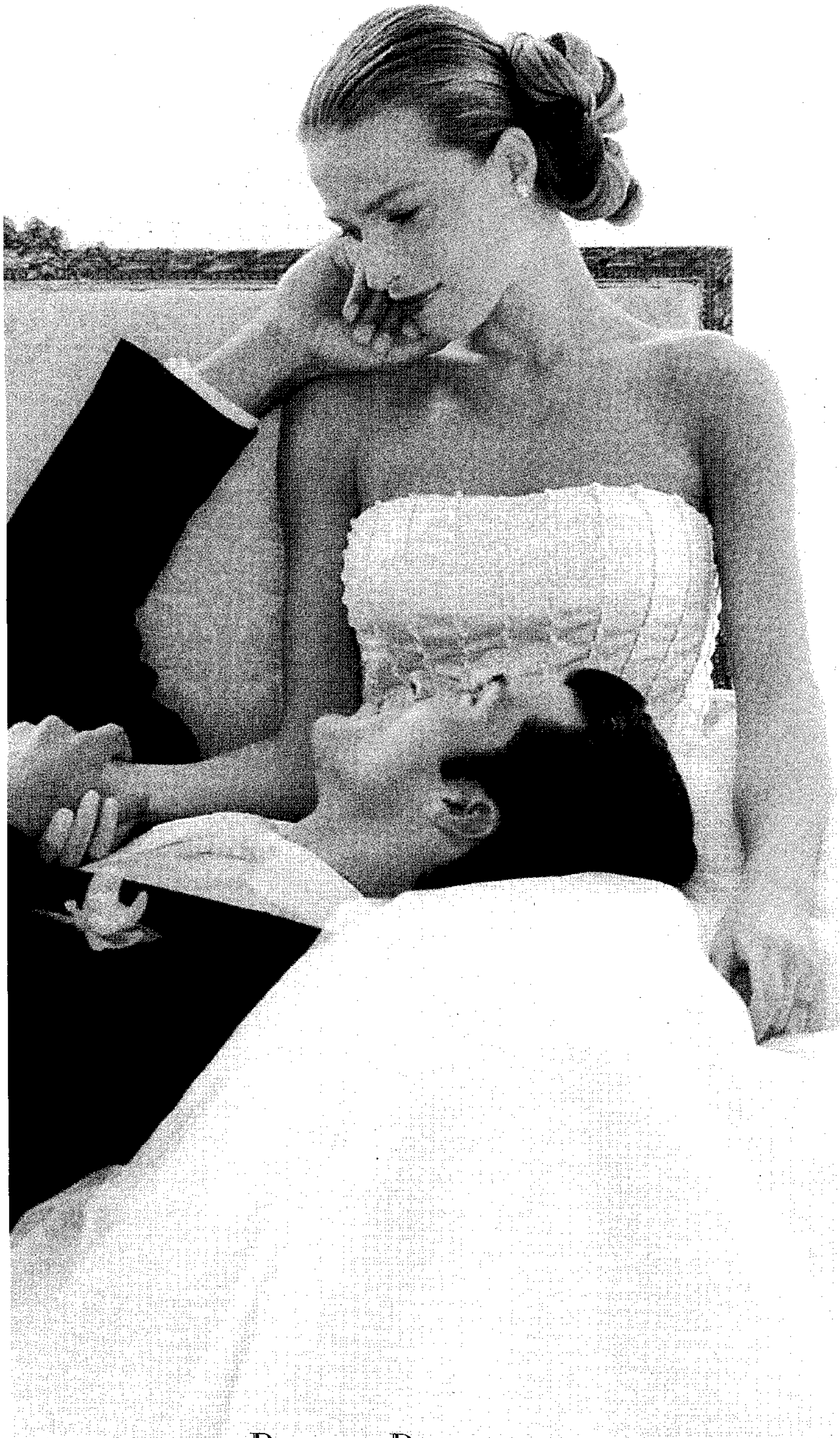
THE CITY WEDDING



An abundance of riches for the couple that sets its sights on a wedding with city style

Cake by - Cathleen Pratt, Manhasset, NY; Photo - Robert Norman Photography, Norwalk CT.

The choices you can live with happily ever after



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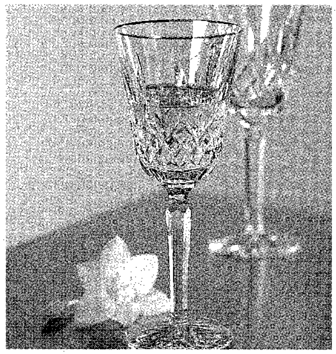

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Our Bridal Registry offers coast-to-coast coordination. Once you register at Macy's, you're registered at all 150 Macy's plus five of the country's other premier department stores*. The computerized registry also ensures your list is always up-to-date; every item purchased will be automatically updated on your preference list when the purchase is scanned at the register.

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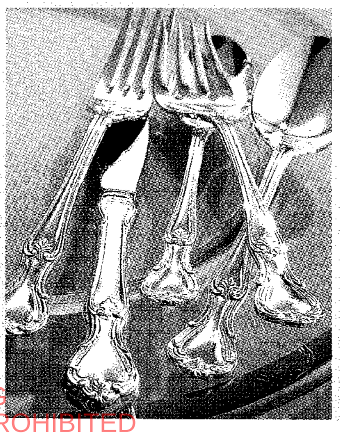
Register for our Bridal Linen Trousseau, a special collection of luxury linens guaranteed to be in stock for the duration of your registry, and get a 10% discount coupon for fashion bedding[†]. You'll also be eligible for our unique Completion Program[†], which offers you a 10% discount on all the gifts left on your registry after the wedding. For all the details about this complimentary service visit the Bridal Registry at your Macy's or call: 1-800-44-WEDDING. And, don't forget to pick up your complimentary copy of The Wedding Book at any Macy's Bridal Registry.



BRIDAL REGISTRY
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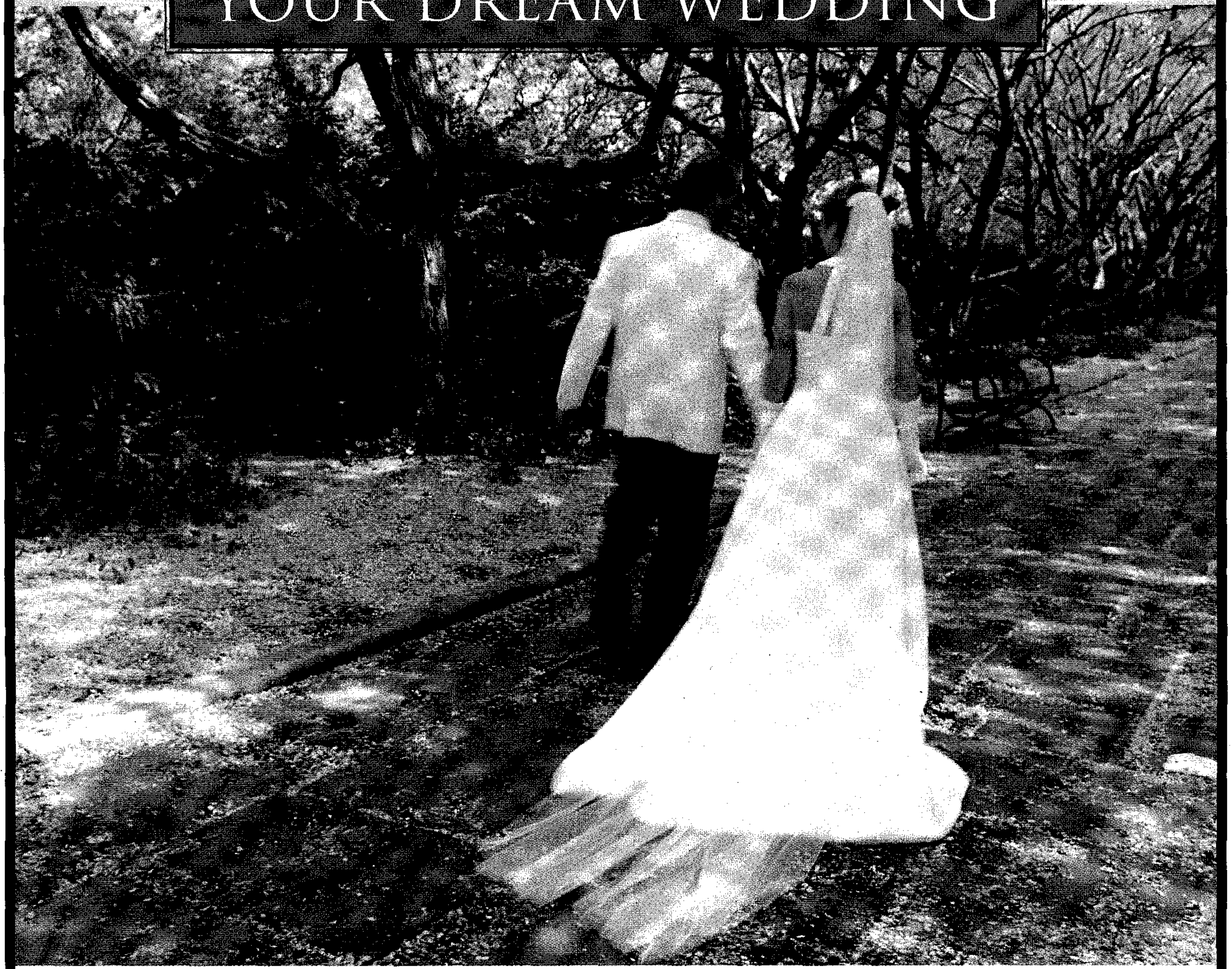
[†] Certain restrictions apply, details in store. [††] Employees of Macy's, Federated, participating retailers, sponsors and their immediate families not eligible. No purchase necessary.
*Burdines, The Bon Marché, Rich's, Lazarus and Goldsmith's.

YOUR DREAM WEDDING



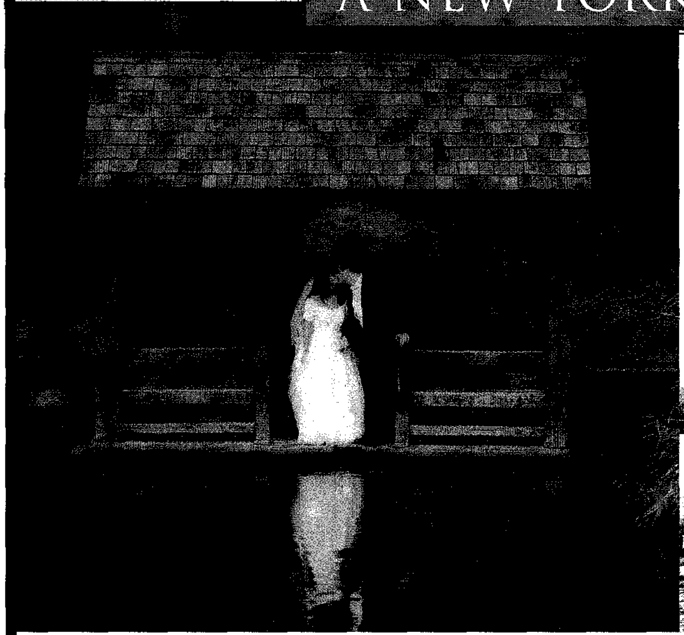
Sarah Merians Photography & Co.

WHEN ROBYN ROTHBARD AND HOWARD ROSEN, BOTH 31, GOT ENGAGED, THEY DECIDED THAT THEY WOULD HAVE WHAT ROBIN CALLS A QUINTESSENTIAL NEW YORK WEDDING. "We wanted our wedding to have a funky feel to it. We're downtown people. When we go out, we go to SoHo or Chelsea. We wanted our wedding to reflect our love of the area," says Robyn, who, like Howard, works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. This downtown duo searched for the perfect place to tie the knot and found it in a yet-unfinished loft. "It had high ceilings and exposed brick walls," recalls Robyn. They were promised that the space would be complete in time for their Fall 1998 wedding, and Robyn and Howard set the date: October 17, 1998.

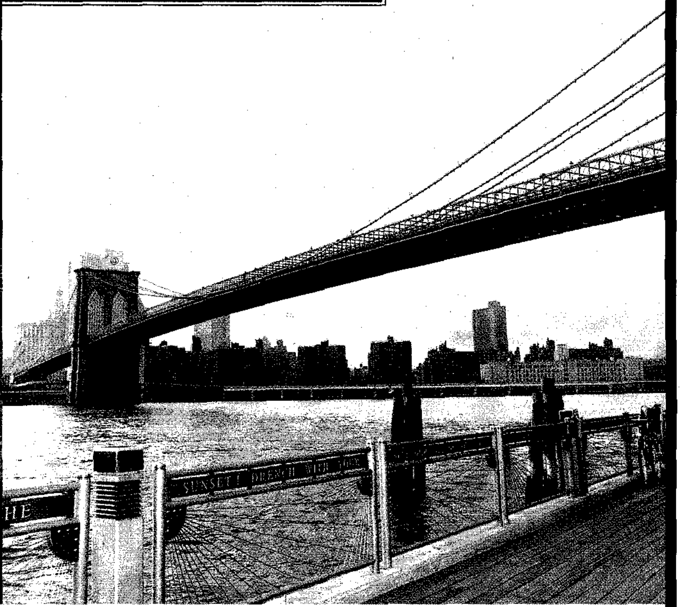
As summer drew to a close, invitations were sent, final dress fittings were done, yet their loft was still a hard-hat area. Finally, 22 days before their wedding, Robyn and Howard realized that they couldn't get married in a construction zone and called their caterer. "He told us about Pier Sixty and suggested we contact them," Robyn recalls. The following Monday the Rosens had their first meeting with a catering manager

☞

A NEW YORK BACKDROP



Andy Marcus, Fred Marcus Photography



Sarah Merians Photography & Co.

there. In what felt like a New York minute, the staff at Pier Sixty at Chelsea Piers put together the quintessential New York wedding Robin and Howard had dreamed of.

"It was like God wanted us to be married there!" recalls Robyn. After sending out fliers to all 275 guests about the updated wedding location, Howard and Robyn could finally relax and begin to get excited about their upcoming nuptials.

On the big day, after spending a restful night with her mother and sister at their midtown hotel, Robyn (toting her wedding dress) hailed a cab to the Piers, where Howard met her for their walk down the aisle. Both were completely enchanted by the setting. "I remember how pretty it was," recalls Howard. The wrought-iron candelabras, exotic flowers, and pin-spot lighting made the whole place "very mysterious and romantic," Howard continues. Adds Robyn, "As we were standing under the chuppa, saying our vows, boats were sailing by in the background. It was like being in a movie and the director said 'Action!' so that all the boats would pass at just the right time." Sounds like the Rosens had a New York wedding that actually exceeded their expectations.

> *"It was like God wanted us to be married there!"*

On Manhattan isle, there is no shortage of inspiring places to tie the knot—from gallery spaces to reception sites high above the New York City skyline. What's more, there are wonderful vendors in the New York area—from designers of custom-made bridal gowns to musicians who swing, to first-rate photographers who capture the moment with flair. Whatever the ideal New York wedding means to you, let *New York* Magazine's biannual guide, "The City Wedding" be your personal handbook for planning one of the most important days in your life.

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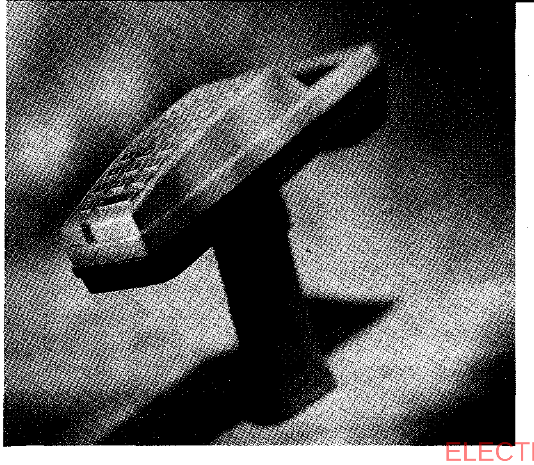
Forever and Everyday



The Club Wedd bridal registry at Target promises everyday comforts and treasured keepsakes, everything from whimsical potholders to fine linens. To register, stop by the Club Wedd kiosk and follow the easy instructions. Then pick up a fun-to-use bar code scanner and scan each item for your list. It's a beautiful place to start. To preregister, visit our web site at www.target.com.

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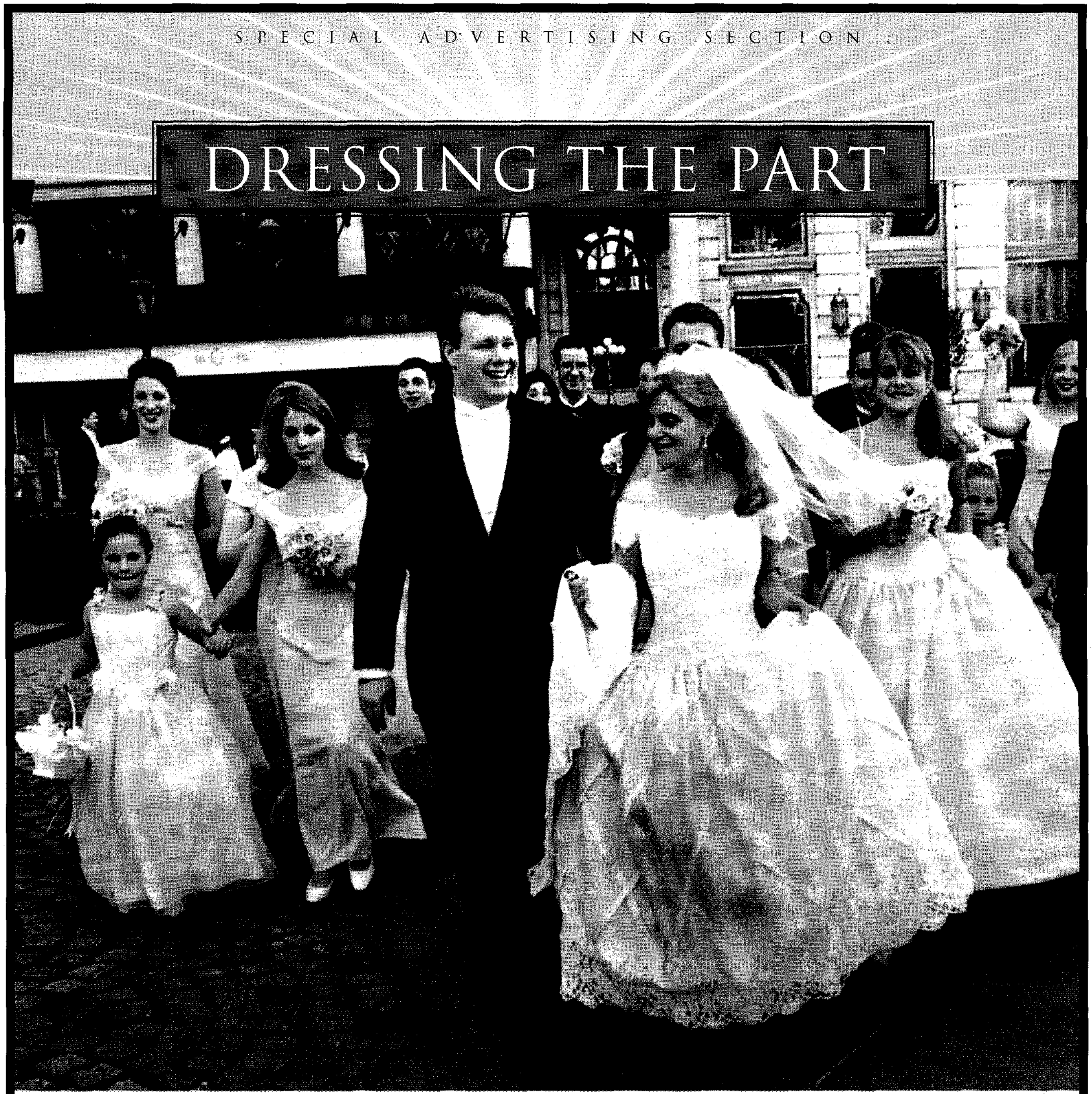
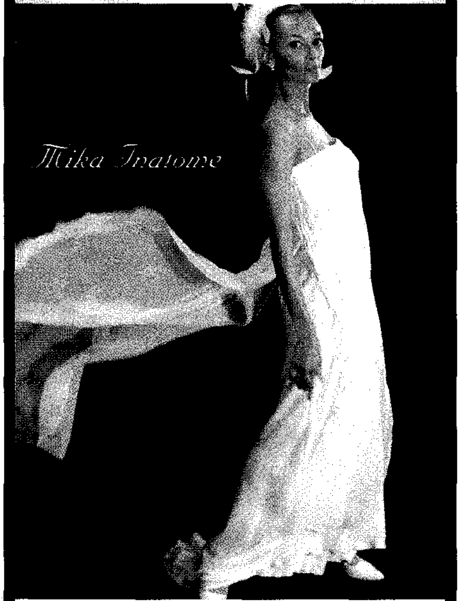


Andy Marcus, Fred Marcus Photography

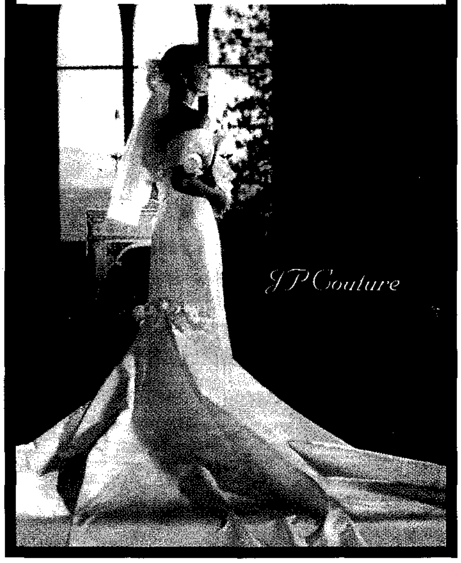
YOU'D THINK BUYING A BRIDAL GOWN WOULD BE EASY. *You find a dress you like in a magazine, go to a store, try the dress on, and voila!, you've got your gown. But things don't always happen so effortlessly. First, there are crowds to contend with. Then, there are the opinions of your mother, sisters, and bridesmaids to weigh. Finally, there is the decision about what kind of look (elegant, informal, classic) to wear down the aisle. Do you desire a designer dress or something off the rack? Perhaps you'd prefer a custom creation. Here are four New York-area bridal boutiques known for gorgeous gowns and personal service. Remember: call ahead and make a date to see the dresses. These boutiques are by appointment only.*

SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION



The bride who buys a **Mika Inatome** (11 Worth St., Suite 4B, 966-7777) dress "is aware of current fashion, style, and trends," says Mika, who tends to design very form-fitting dresses. Mika highlights each woman's inherent beauty by creating gowns that are decorated with pearls and crystals, if the bride so chooses.

Janine E. Posa, the brain behind **JP Couture** (201-444-3788), feels that each



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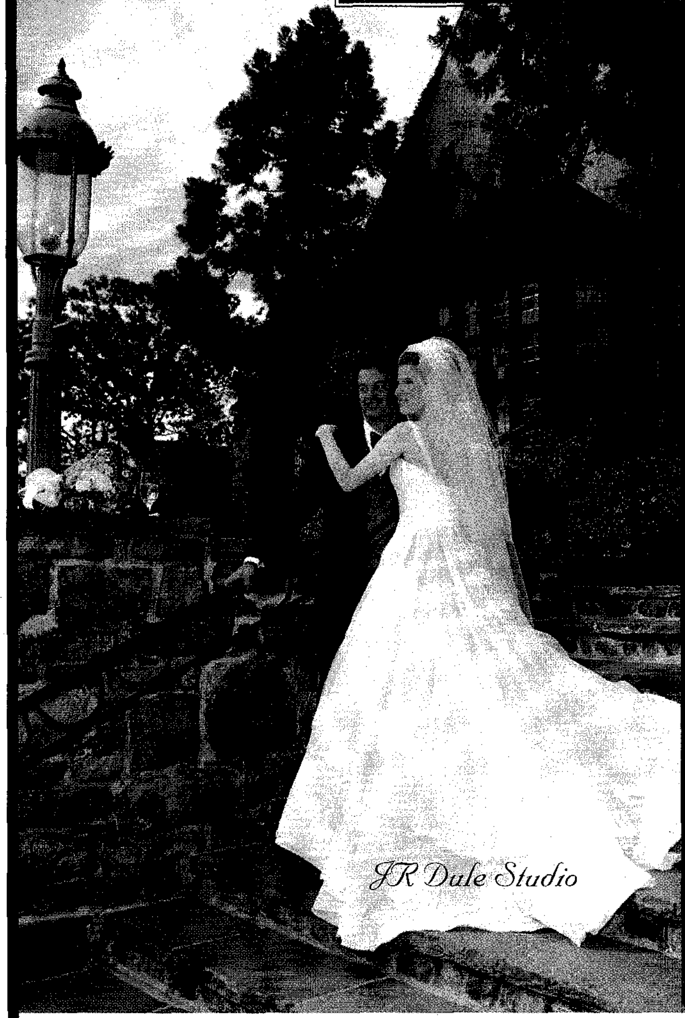
VISIONS IN WHITE



Yumi Katsura

gown she designs becomes a dream come true for the bride. "Through one-on-one consultations and fittings, the bride watches the sketched design transform into the gown of her dreams," says Janine, who once worked with bridal design doyenne Vera Wang. "Every bride who walks down the aisle in a JP Couture gown has a certain confidence and glow about her."

Dress designer Jennifer Dule says, "My customer definitely wants input into her dress. She has her own vision, and I help her create it." Her creations come to life through her company **JR Dule Studio** (133 Fifth Ave., 3rd Floor, 777-2100). Jennifer designs gowns that are often accentuated with delicate hand embroidery or simple embellishments. She shows crystal in her headpieces and says, "I love using crystals because they light up the bride's face."

The bride who buys a gown from **Yumi Katsura** (907 Madison Ave., 772-3760; www.yumikatsura.com) is looking to "shatter the mold of traditional bridal dressing," says Erisa, designer for Yumi Katsura and the Erisa Collection. Her dresses tend to feature light illusion fabrics, slim silhouettes, and interesting embroidery. One such dress features white organza with silver and blue vine-like appliqués gently cascading toward the floor.

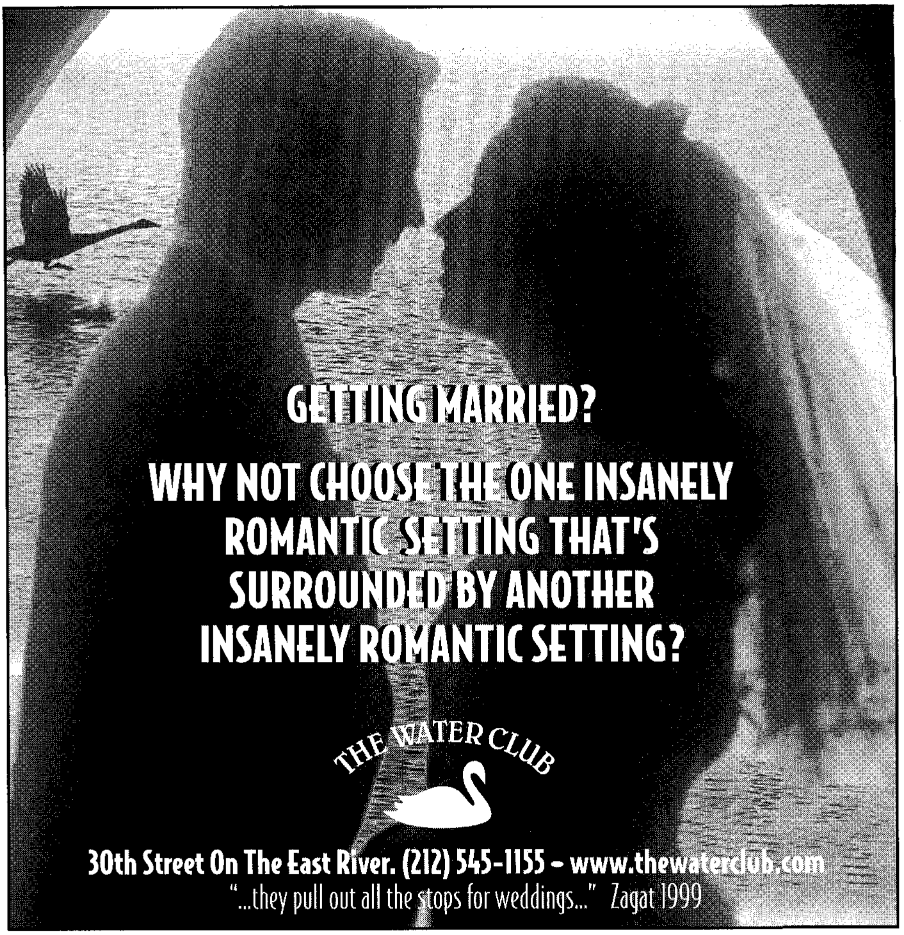
SPECIAL
ADVERTISING
SECTION

Mari Vi Creations

ABSOLUTELY FABULOUS BRIDAL ACCESSORIES

A bridal ensemble wouldn't be complete without the requisite accessories. **Mari Vi Creations** (43A Church St., Montclair, New Jersey, 973-509-6010) carries flower girl dresses, headpieces, veils, and handbags, along with guest books, pillows, and birdcages (a clever way to collect gift cards from guests). Many items are designed by owner Maria Aleman. Mari Vi also sells unique 11-inch-tall wire mannequins dressed in bridal regalia (above). A Cuban wedding tradition, these mini mannequins make great centerpieces or gifts.

Background photo - Sarah Merians Photography & Co.



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MODERN MAIDS

Andy Marcus, Fred Marcus Photography

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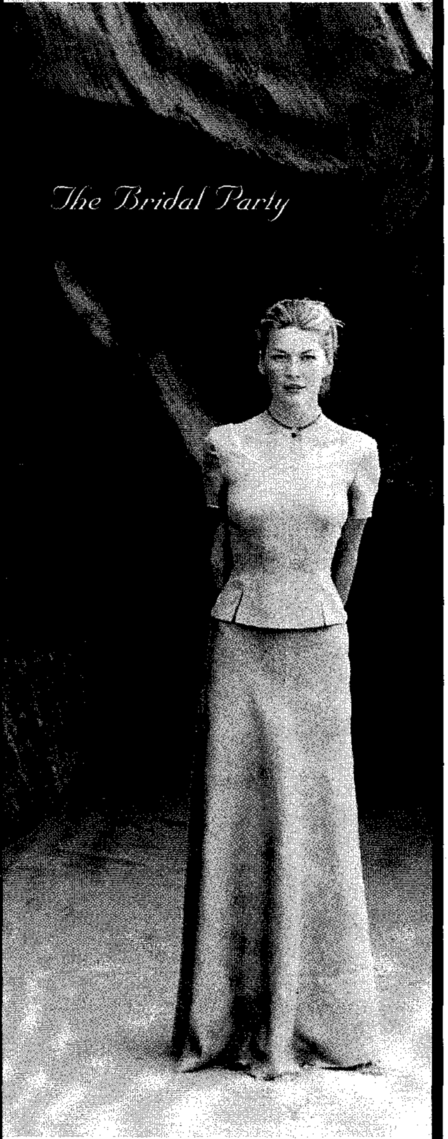
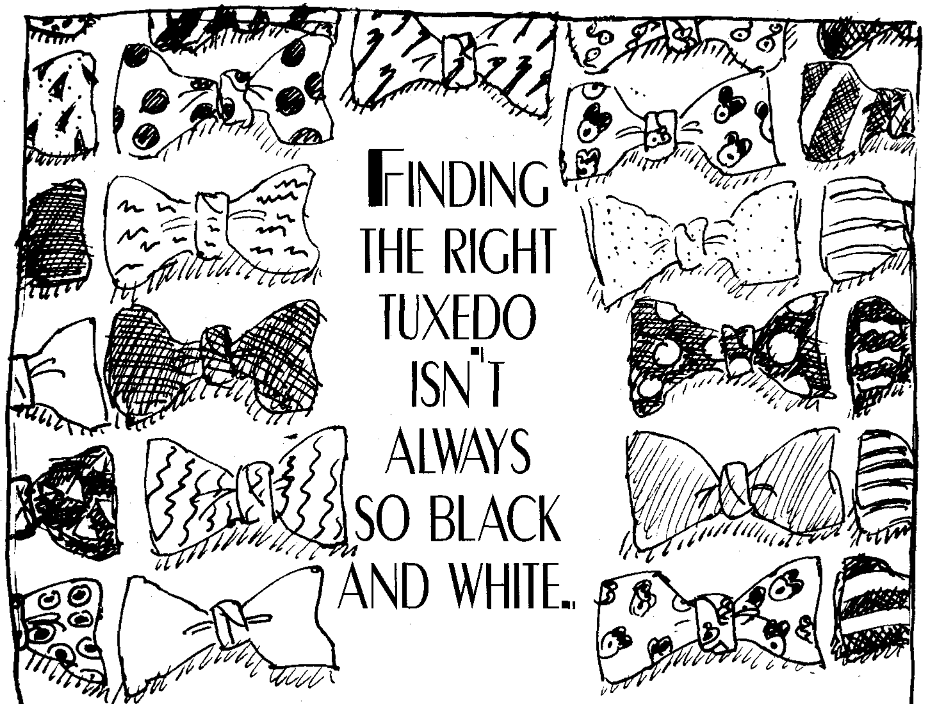


*Twin sets do double duty. "We're selling a lot of skirts to bridesmaids, and then they're buying their own twin sets to match," notes Daphne Silverstein, owner of **The Bridal Party—Dresses for Bridesmaids** (243 E. 82nd St., 861-2318). Not only are twin sets comfortable, but "with so many women self-conscious about their arms, and so



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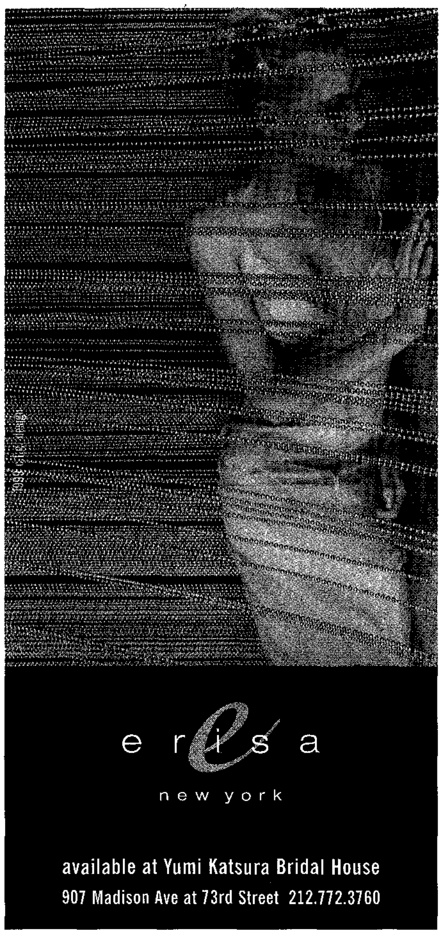

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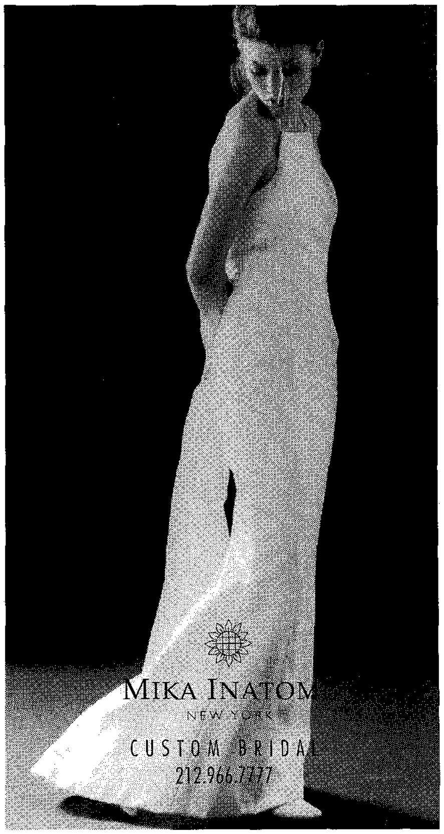

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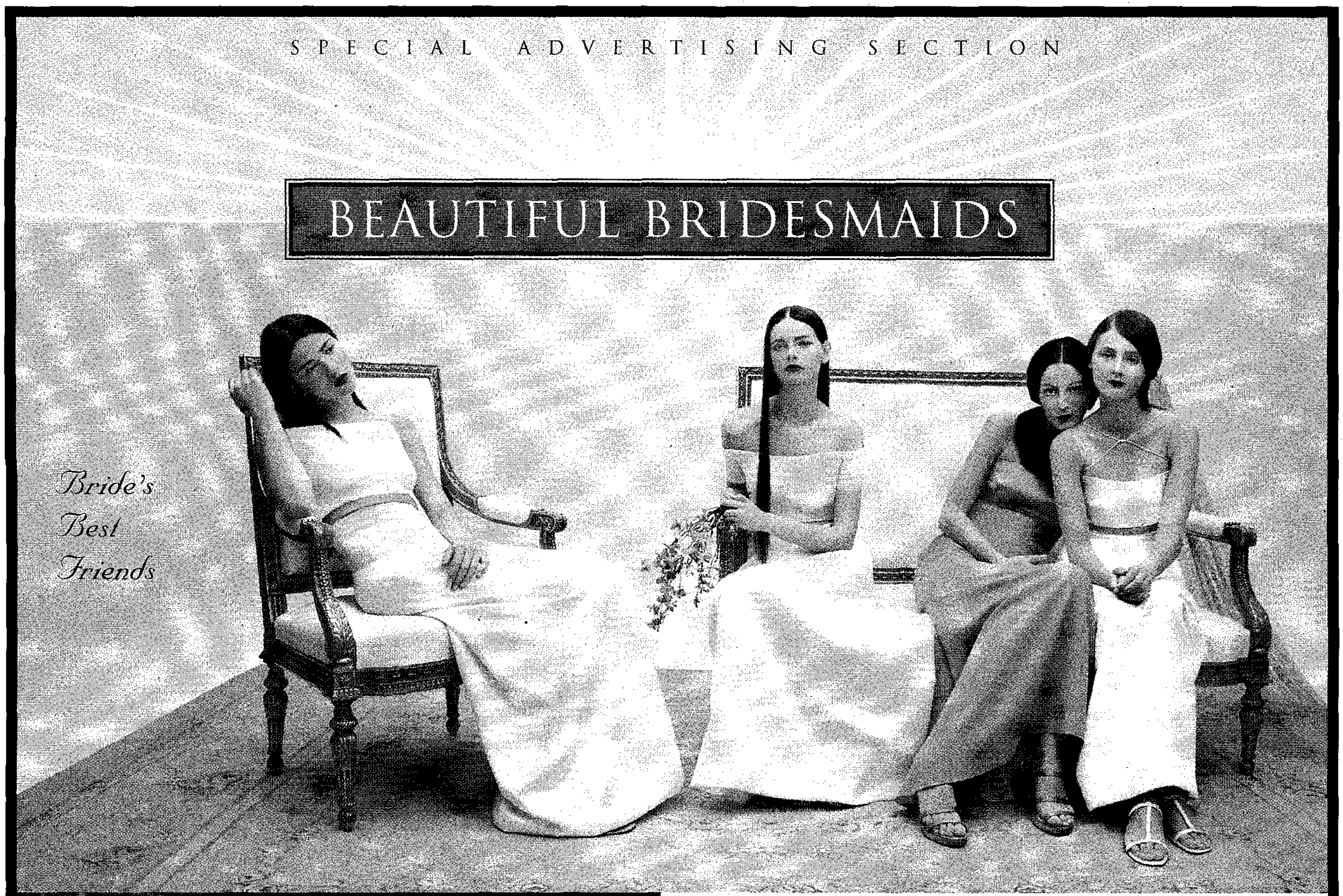
BEAUTIFUL BRIDESMAIDS



Josephine Sasso

many dresses that are sleeveless, women can now cover up their arms during the ceremony." Check out The Bridal Party on the web at www.weddingcentral.com/ny/bridalp/.

* **Couture for sure.** "Brides today are much more attentive to fashion. They're choosing bridesmaid dresses that are flattering and more couture looking," says Josephine Sasso, president of **Josephine Sasso** (226 E. 78th St., 396-9692), a jewel of a store that sells bridesmaid and mother-of-the-bride dresses in hundreds of styles and fabric choices. The dresses here are so fashion conscious that, explains Sasso, "they really can be worn again."

* **Mix and match.** "We now carry A-line skirts, pleated skirts, you name it, so girls can mix and match tops and skirts that flatter any figure," explains Ilene Rauch, a co-owner with Elizabeth Fisher of **Bride's Best Friends** (11 E. Palisade Ave., Englewood, NJ, 201-541-1333), a shop that specializes in bridesmaid dresses and carries the complete line of attendant wear by Vera Wang. Because of the store's New Jersey locale, patrons pay no sales tax on clothing.

SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION

A HAPPY EVER AFTER

How to keep your wedding gown looking brand new 'til death do you part? Immediately after the wedding, have it carefully cleaned and restored by a dry cleaner that specializes in bridal. Don't wait for any stains to set. Manhattan's top choice is **Madame Paulette** (1255 Second Ave., 838-6827, 1-888-COUTURE), a second-generation family-owned business, considered the ultimate authority on cleaning the finest designer creations in the world. Vera Wang, Yumi Katsura, Badgley Mischka, Bergdorf Goodman, and Saks are among those who exclusively trust Madame Paulette to preserve the integrity of their collections.

Sarah Merians Photography & Co.

Background photo - Sarah Merians Photography & Co.

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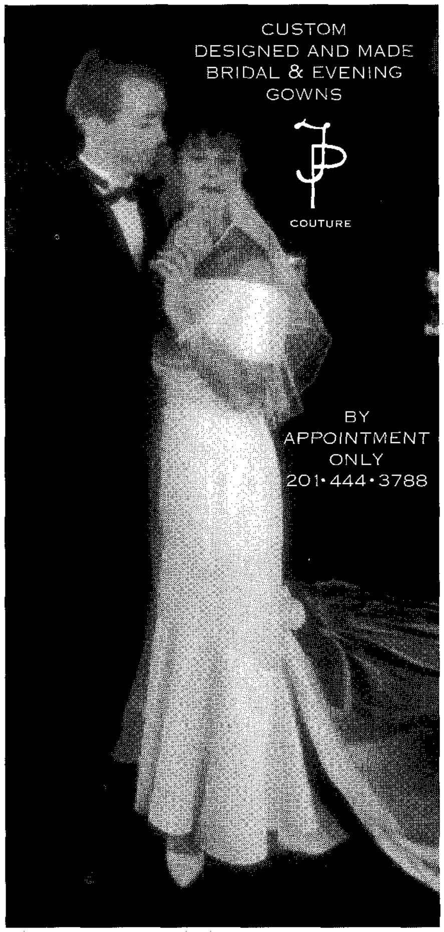

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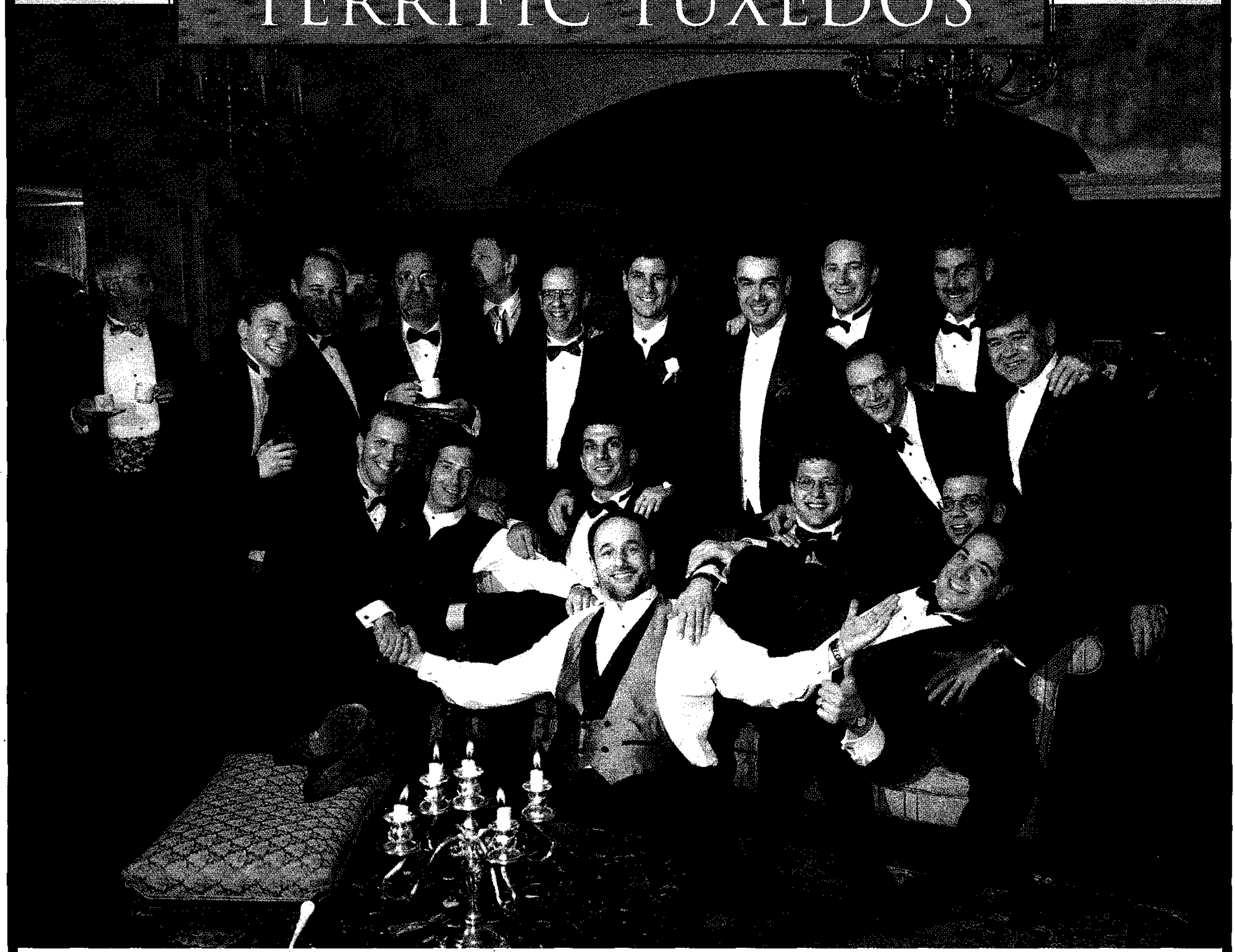
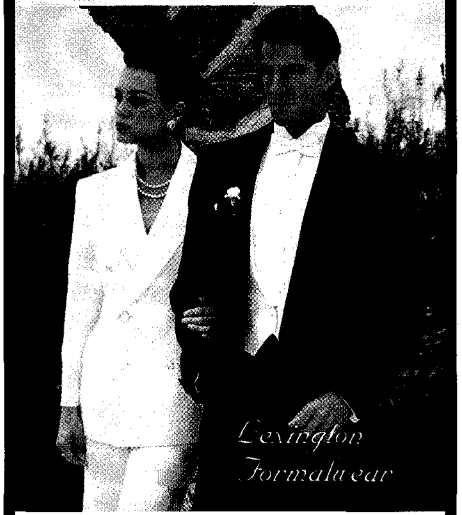
TERRIFIC TUXEDOS

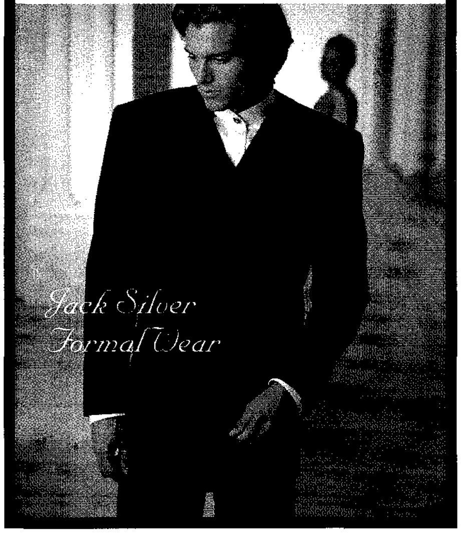


Sarah Merians Photography & Co.

LIKE HIS BEAUTIFUL BRIDE, TODAY'S GROOM DESIRES A MODERN YET SOPHISTICATED LOOK. *Besides going for classic black-tie (which is always in fashion), many men are selecting four-in-hand or Windsor ties, which add a unique, elegant touch to any tuxedo. "I'm not sure where this trend is coming from, but perhaps it's in response to casual Fridays at the office," says Susan Schreiber, president of* **Lexington Formalwear** *(12 E. 46th St., 867-4420), a 3,000 square-foot shop that contains New York's largest in-house selection of tuxedos, white tie and tails, morning suits, and accessories from such designers as Perry Ellis, Oscar de la Renta, and Givenchy. The store is so well-stocked (and well-versed in the ins and outs of wedding fashion) that it carries on premise more than 14 tuxedo styles in sizes for every groomsman in the bridal party.*



At **Jack Silver Formal Wear** (1780 Broadway, 582-0202), the movie *Titanic* has influenced men's formalwear choices. "We're seeing more full dress, white tie, and tails than ever before," notes manager Darrin Gordon. And it isn't just the groom who is dressing up. "Today we're outfitting entire wedding parties in white tie and tails," says Gordon. Jack Silver rents and sells tuxedos, strollers, morning suits, and accessories by Christian Dior, Pierre Cardin, Chaps Ralph Lauren, and Perry Ellis.



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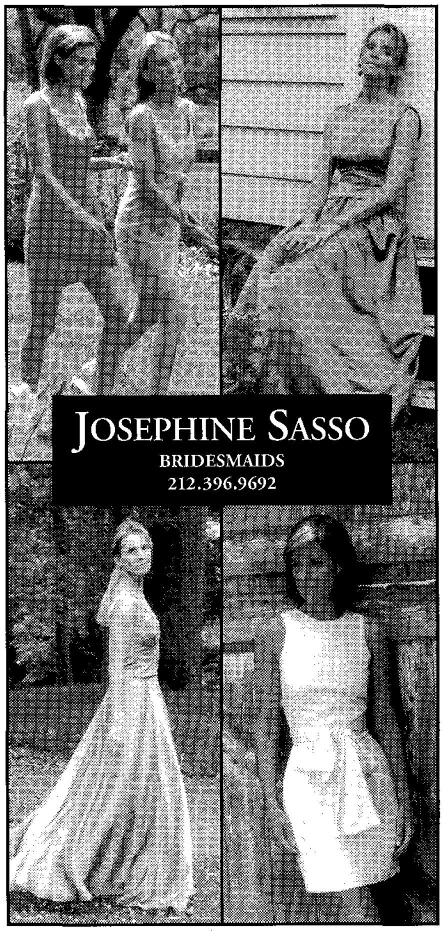

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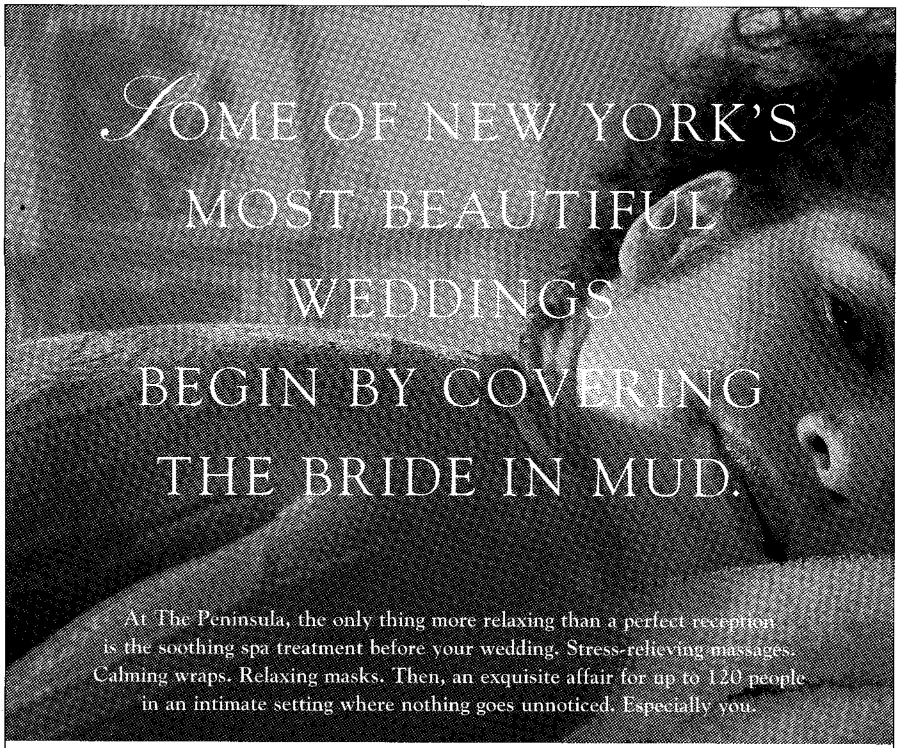
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SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION

SAY "I DO" TO SAVINGS

Brides who would prefer to be fabulously frugal on their wedding day might find frequenting the following three bridal salons an act that won't cost them a lot, but will make a lot of sense:

The Bridal Garden (122 E. 29th St., 252-0661) resells donated couture and designer gowns for a fraction of their original price (many of which have never been worn) from Ulla Maija, Marissa, and One of A Kind Bride, among others. All proceeds go to Sheltering Arms Childrens Service, which has been helping disadvantaged children since 1823.

Michael's The Consignment Shop for Women and Brides (1041 Madison Ave., 2nd Floor, 737-7273) stocks gently used couture clothing as well as outstanding designer wedding gowns in sizes two to 14. These gowns, by such well-known designers as Vera Wang, Oscar de la Renta, Dior, and Christos, originally

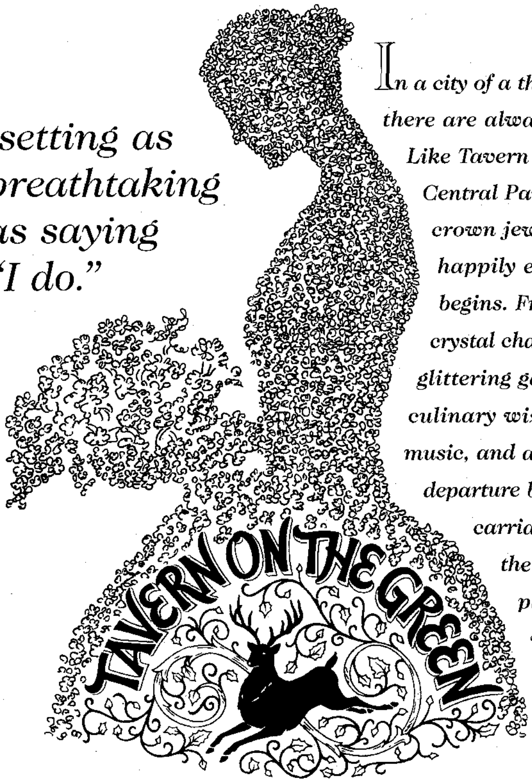
Background photo - Andy Marcus, Fred Marcus Photography

YOUR DRESS FOR LESS

retailed for up to $5,000. Here, they can be had for between $350 and $1,500.

Tati (475 Fifth Ave., 481-TATI) is a European company that sells bridal gowns at a considerable savings. "There's no shame in buying a discounted bridal gown," says Ilyse Wilpon, owner of Tati USA. "Brides want value for their dollar" and find it at Tati. Designers like Elizabeth Emmanuel (who designed Princess Diana's wedding dress) and Sybilla sell their overruns to Tati, which sells no dress for more than $599. The store also sells amazingly affordable bridal lingerie.

Background photo - Sarah Merians Photography & Co.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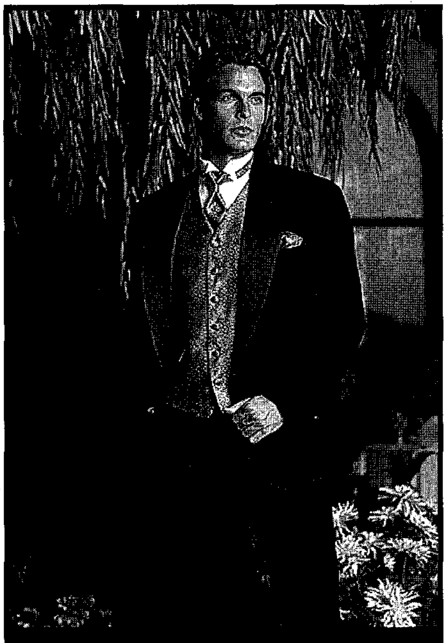
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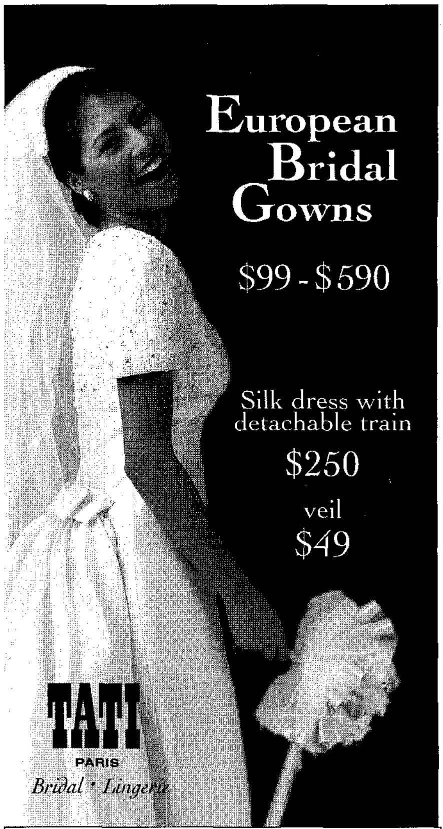
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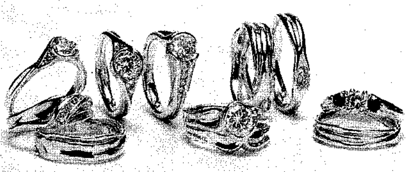
ENGAGING RINGS

Cyndy Warwick Photography

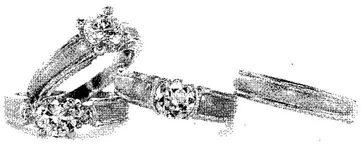
PARK SLOPE RESIDENTS ALISON STERN, 28, AND AARON SIMARD, 27, ARE AN ACTIVE COUPLE. *They hike on the weekends and got engaged in Costa Rica. So it makes perfect sense that they chose rings for their May 1998 wedding that reflect their love for adventure. The store of their choice?* **The Clay Pot** *(162 Seventh Ave., Brooklyn, 718-788-6564), where they found an engagement band and wedding rings engraved with leaves. Hardly typical, but then again, The Clay Pot specializes in the extraordinary. "We offer 900 ring styles from more than 90 artists from around the country," says owner Bob* Silberberg.



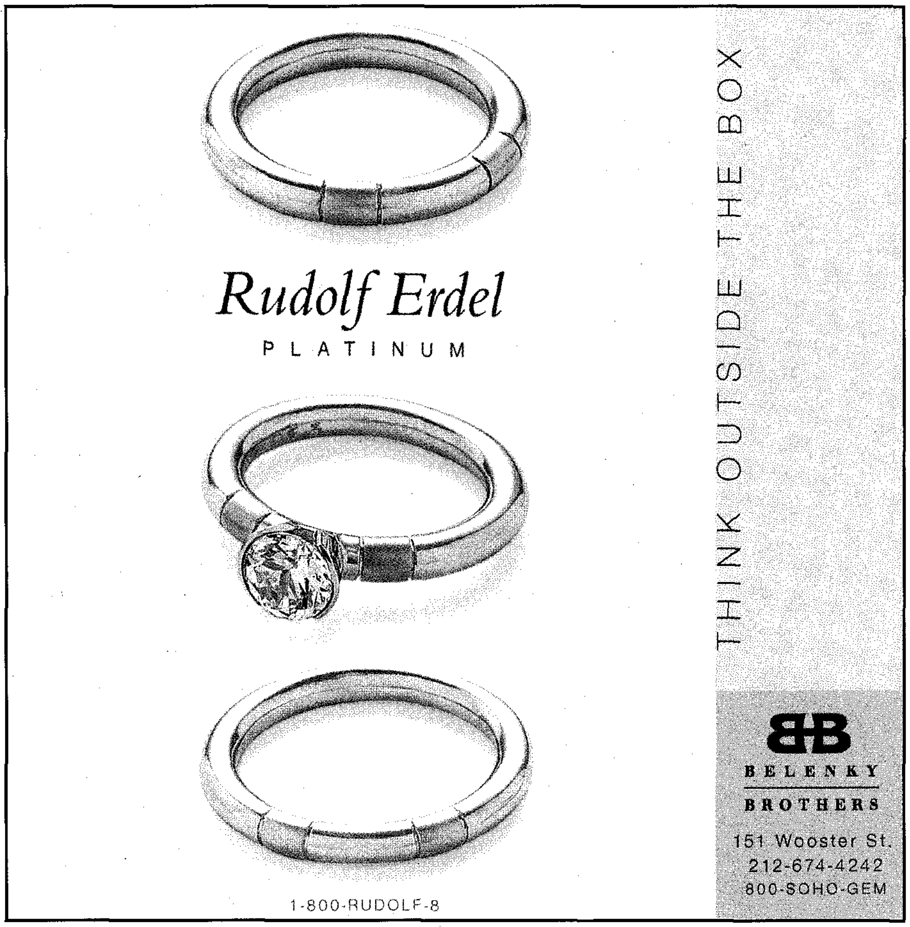
The Clay Pot

"All of our rings are made by individuals." Nothing in this eclectic shop is mass produced, which is why Alison and Aaron chose it. "People who have a unique, modern eye go to The Clay Pot," she says.

Rudolph Erdel Platinum



Platinum lovers look for designer **Rudolf Erdel Platinum** (1-800-RUDOLF- 8) rings in finer stores such as Neiman Marcus. The company recently launched a bridal collection which features signature satin-finish platinum rings accented by polished platinum with diamonds and semi-precious stones. "The collection combines modern and classic elements in the bold, original designs that have become a trademark of Rudolf Erdel," says Luly Erdel, president of the company, which is known for truly exquisite platinum rings in varying styles.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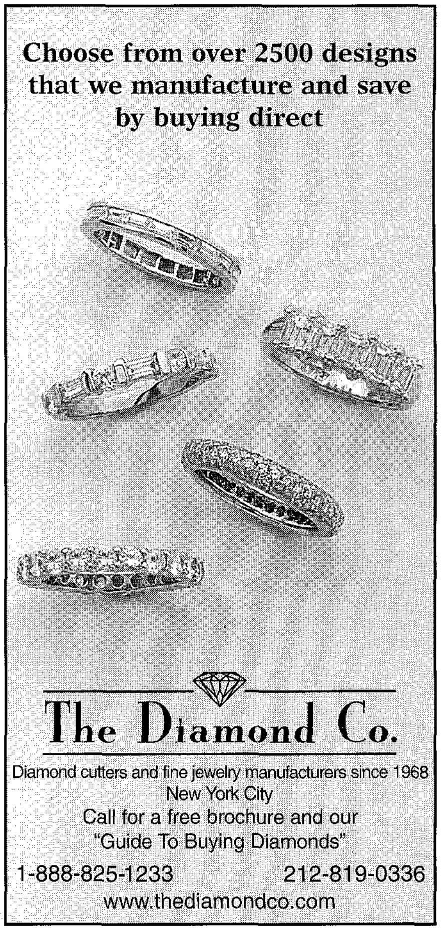
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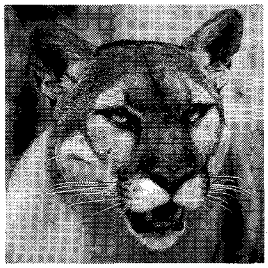

You'd complain, too, if someone left trash in your backyard. Lots of animals call our national parks home — from panthers to porcupines. But people are spoiling their habitats.

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It's our job to protect their homes … for today's kids and those to come. Remember when you visit, the only mark you leave should be footprints.

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SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION

ENGAGING RINGS

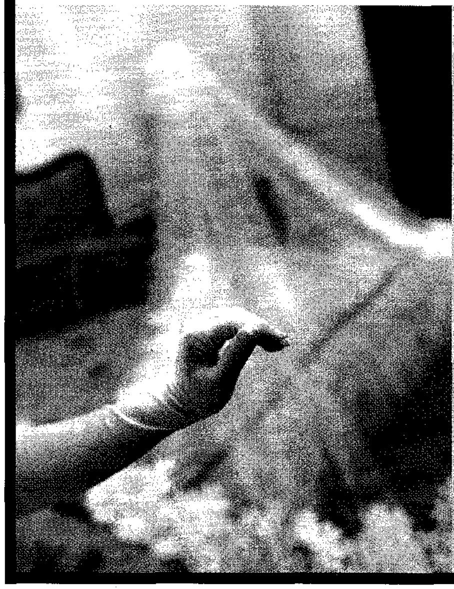
Wedding Ring Originals

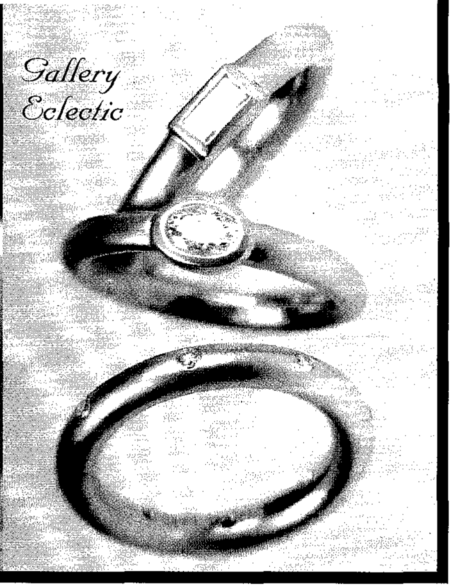
Stardust Antiques

Platinum is hot at **Wedding Ring Originals** (674 Lexington Ave., 751-3940), where women are choosing brilliant white platinum for engagement rings as well as their wedding bands. Couples can check out more than 2,000 rings in the store or browse 200 styles online at www.weddingrings.com.

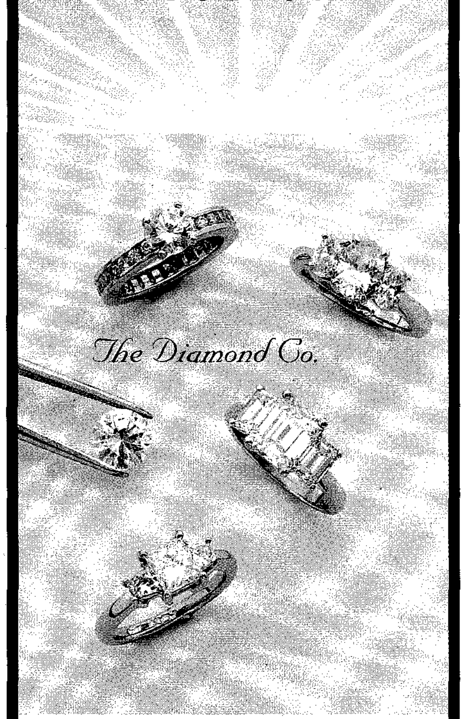
What's old is new at **Stardust Antiques** (38 Gramercy Park on 21st St., 677-2590), which specializes in one-of-a-kind, antique platinum and diamond engagement rings and weddings bands in turn of the century and Art Deco styles. Some are enhanced with emerald, sapphire, and ruby accents.

Stars like newly engaged Courtney Cox are enchanted by Catherine Angiel's designs at **Gallery Eclectic** (43 Greenwich Ave., 924-4314; 27 Main St., Southampton, NY, 516-287-0463). Angiel, the store's owner and design genius, creates one-of-a-kind rings using precious metals and breathtaking stones, which she'll position so that each ring complements a bride's hand.





Andy Marcus, Fred Marcus Photography



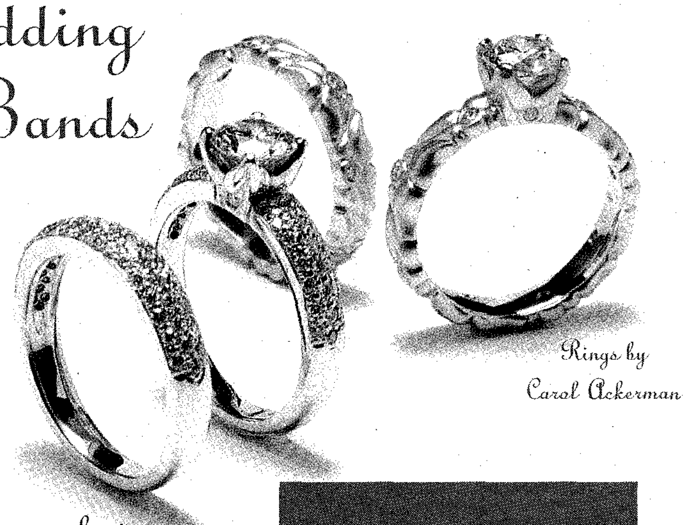
DIAMOND SAVVY

Diamonds can be a girl's best friend, if you know how to shop for one:

* **Do buy a diamond loose.** "Buying a diamond loose lets you see the actual occlusions and color differences," says David Levy, vice president of **The Diamond Co.** (62 W. 47th St., Suite 1208, 819-0336, 1-888-825-1233), which offers 2,500 styles of rings, earrings, necklaces, and bracelets.

* **Don't buy a diamond without an independent lab grading report.** These reports come from the Gemological Institute of America (GIA), International Gemological Institute (IGI), European Gemological Laboratory (EGL) and American Gem Society (AGS).

* **Don't forget your 4C's—cut, color, clarity, and carat weight.**



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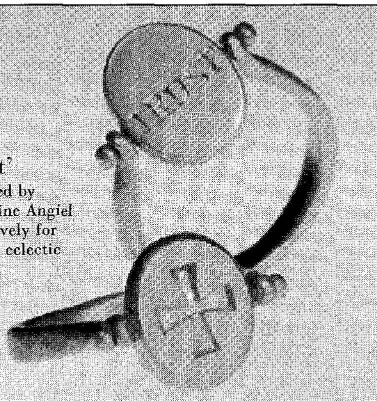

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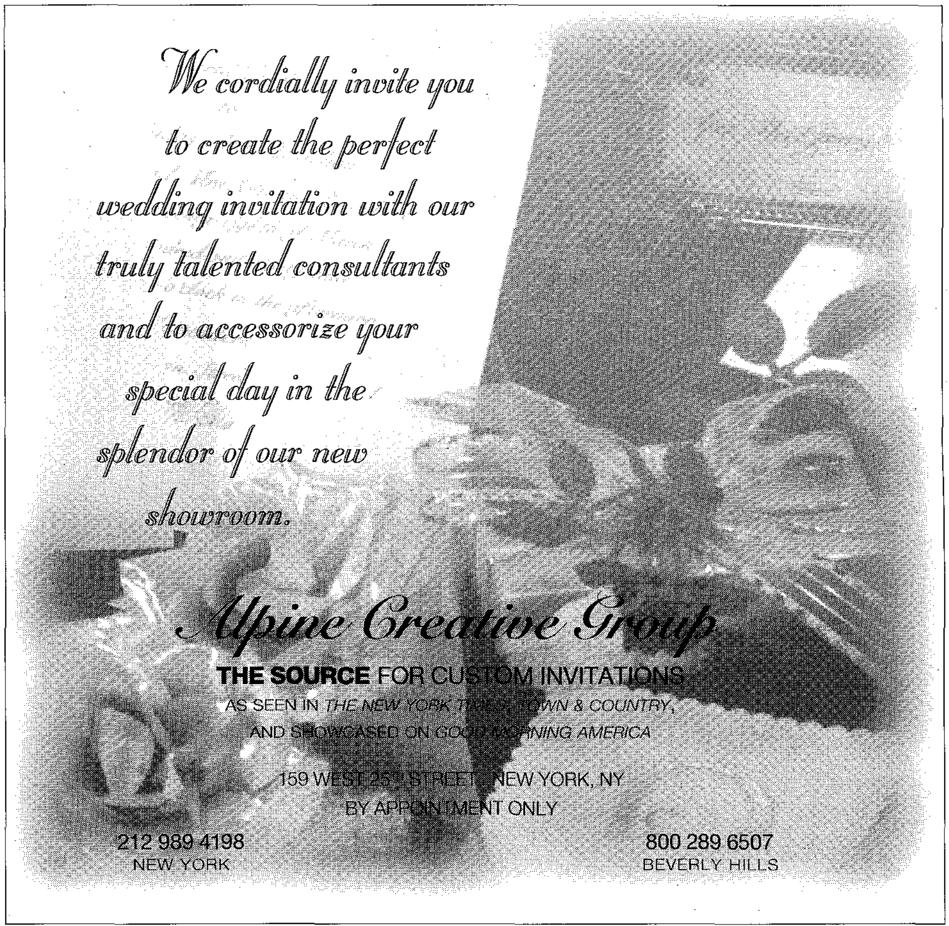
BE OUR GUEST

Since 1999 is the Year of the Party, your wedding may be one of many millennium parties your guests are invited to. Therefore, we suggest sending a "save the date" card four to six months before your wedding, says Laura Leigh, owner of **Alpine Creative Group** (159 W. 25th St., 989-4198, 1-800-289-6507), a full service invitation company. If you do, make sure you use the same theme for the save the date card as you do your invitations, seating cards, thank-you notes, napkins, and programs. As the new millennium approaches, Leigh reports that colorful cards with upbeat borders, translucent vellum wraps around traditional cards, and

Sarah Merians Photography & Co.



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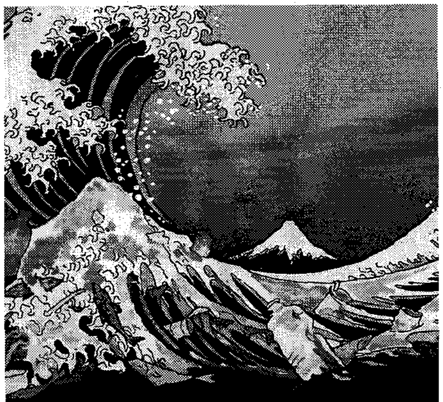

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SOUNDS THAT SWING

cards with pastel or metallic inks or accents are all the rage.

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

The best band to have perform at a wedding is one that is versatile in many music genres, as is **Ken Gross Orchestras** (1-800-688-4480), which has six bands whose repertoire includes R&B, Motown, and everything from Swing through Top 40 and Classical music. It was the company's versatility that convinced Hillary and Joseph Kessler-Godin, both 30, to hire Ken Gross Orchestras for their November 15, 1998 wedding. The New York City couple was not disappointed. "All of our guests filled the dance floor and we're still getting compliments on Ken's amazing band, Hillary says.

Another music maestro is **Lester Lanin** (157 W. 57th St., 265-5208), who has been the band leader at literally thousands of weddings. "The right music makes for a truly great wedding," says Lanin, who treats each affair as a unique event, distinguished by the personalities of the bride and groom. In addition to leading his own stellar band, Lanin also represents several set ensembles that range in size from a single piano player to a full orchestra. Lanin strives to perform uniquely tailored music to match each couple's personalities and desires.

Sarah Merians Photography & Co.

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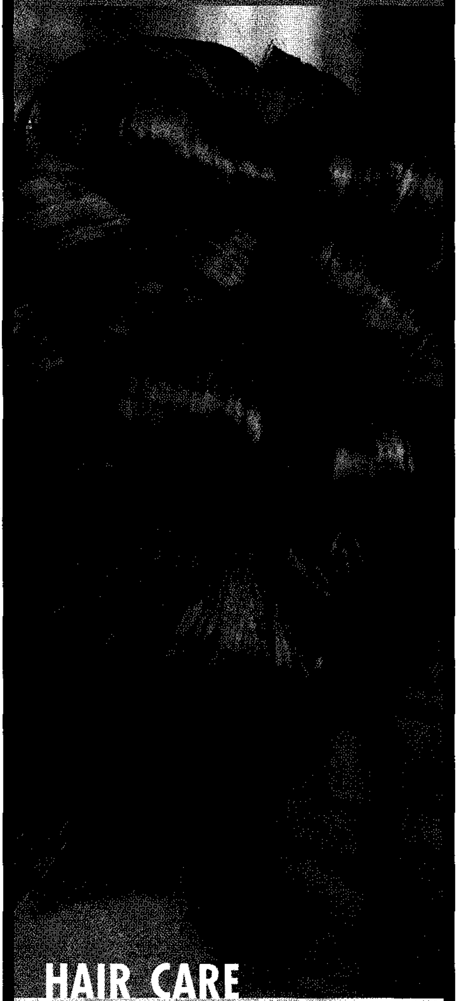

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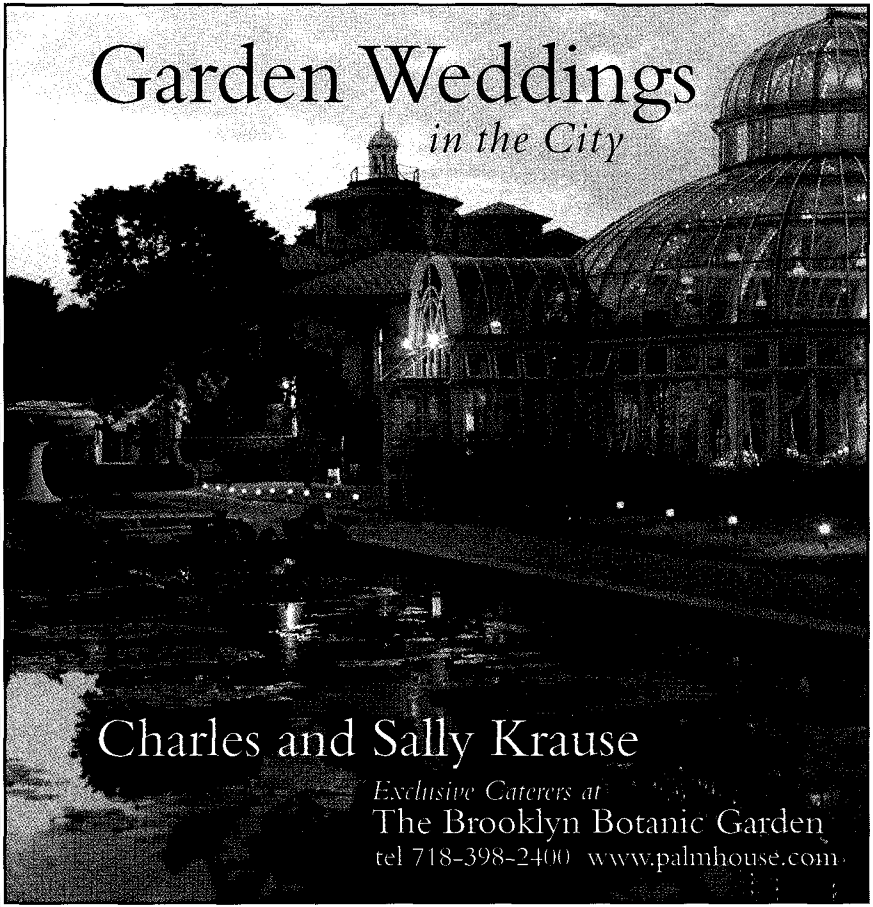
Sarah Merians Photography & Co.
Background photo - Sarah Merians Photography & Co.



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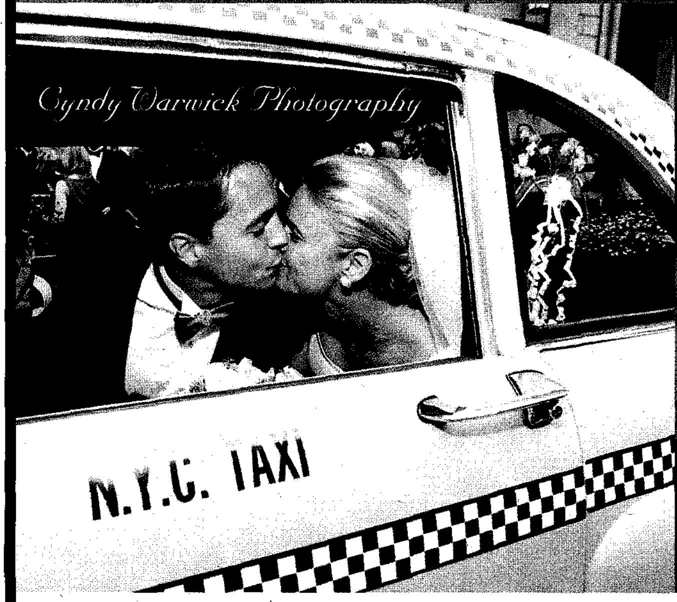
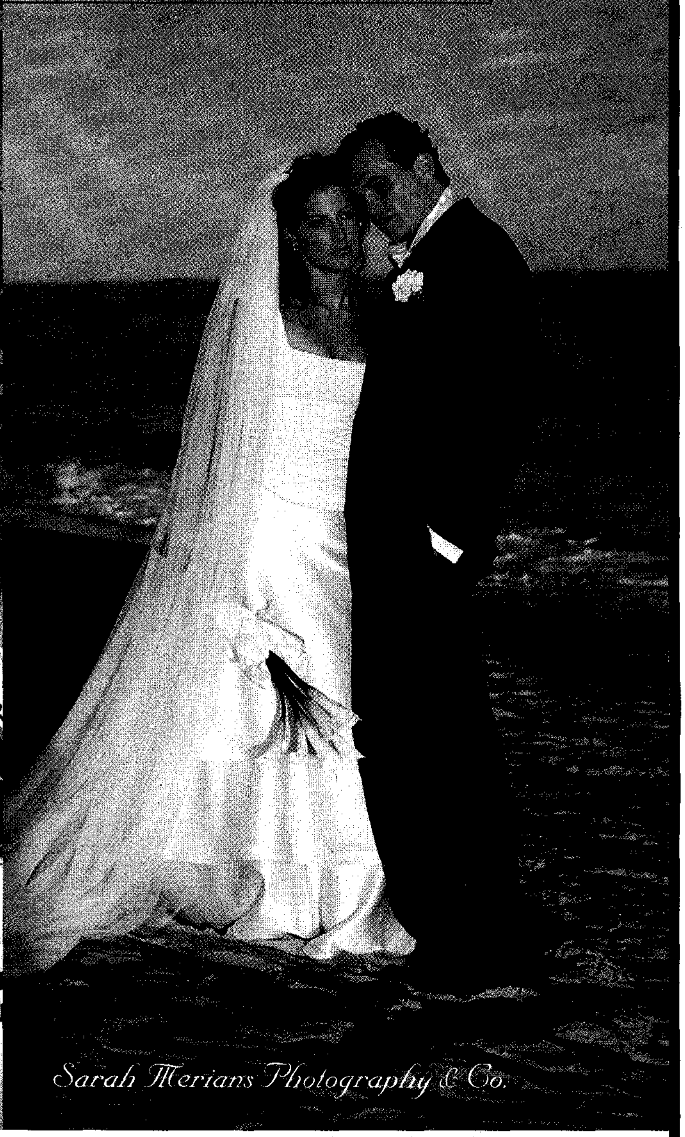


Cyndy Warwick Photography



Sarah Merians Photography & Co.

"PEOPLE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR SOMETHING NEW AND DIFFERENT," *says Andy Marcus, president of* **Fred Marcus Photography** *(245 W. 72nd St., 873-5588), including the photographs that will capture their wedding memories forever. Although Fred Marcus Photography shoots beautiful classic wedding photos, it also offers the unconventional, such as more candid, editorial-style shots, featuring couples on Fifth Avenue or flagging down a city bus. What follows are some of the trends currently popular in wedding photography.*

* **Photojournalism, a style of unposed, candid photography.** "It's a comfortable photography," says Cyndy Warwick of **Cyndy Warwick Photography** (420-4760), who specializes in photojournalistic wedding photography. People don't want to be put in a position of having someone in their face.

Michelle Grossman, 25, recalls, "I wanted a look that was more photojournalistic than contrived, so I picked a photographer who had a more candid approach." She chose **Sarah Merians Photography & Co.** (104 Fifth Ave., 4th Floor, 633-0502) "whose work blew me away."

"Documentary style photography requires a certain talent," cautions Warwick. "This, coupled with a rapport between the photographer and the wedding party, especially the bride, are necessary. It's also important to view

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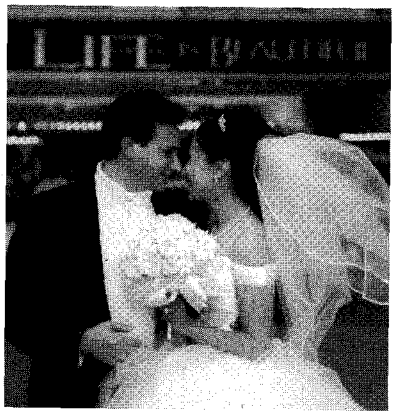

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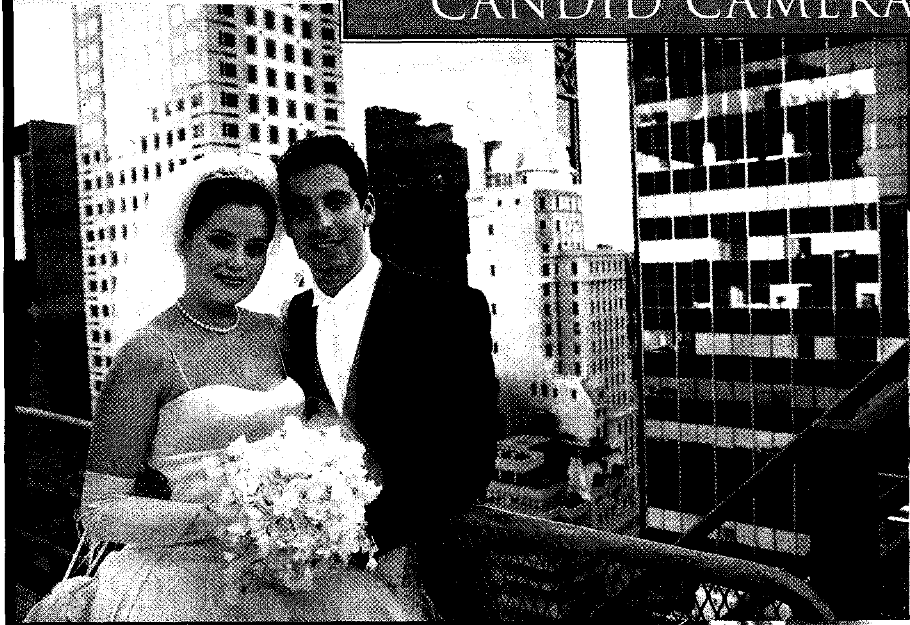


Andy Marcus, Fred Marcus Photography, Fred Marcus Photography

Cyndy Warwick Photography

Cyndy Warwick Photography

several of the photographer's wedding portfolios and trust your instincts regarding personal chemistry."

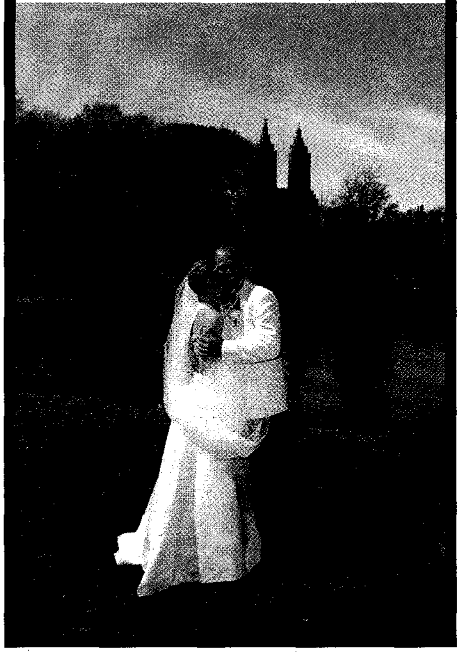
"In addition," says Elizabeth Beskin, partner in Sarah Merians Photography & Co., "because every couple wants to look beautiful on their wedding day, it's important to find a photographer who can shoot wonderful portraiture as well as photojournalism."

* **Digital photo albums, in which wedding photographs are computer-enhanced to create special effects.** With this process, photos can take on custom backgrounds or colors, or

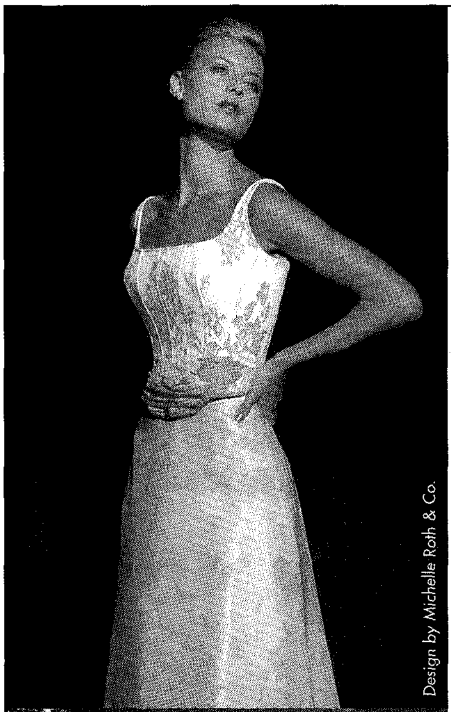
Cyndy Warwick Photography

Andy Marcus, Fred Marcus Photography

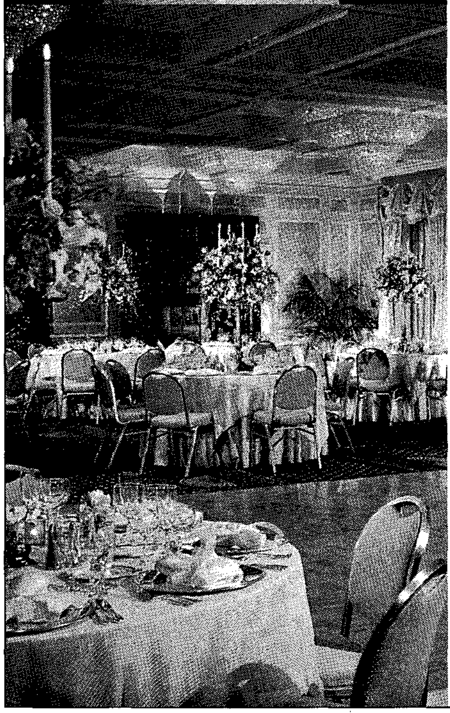
even multiple images. Fred Marcus Photography is one of the only New York studios offering this service. "We can take a portrait of the bride and groom and make it look as if they're walking down Broadway," says Andy.



Sarah Merians Photography & Co.



Design by Michelle Roth & Co.



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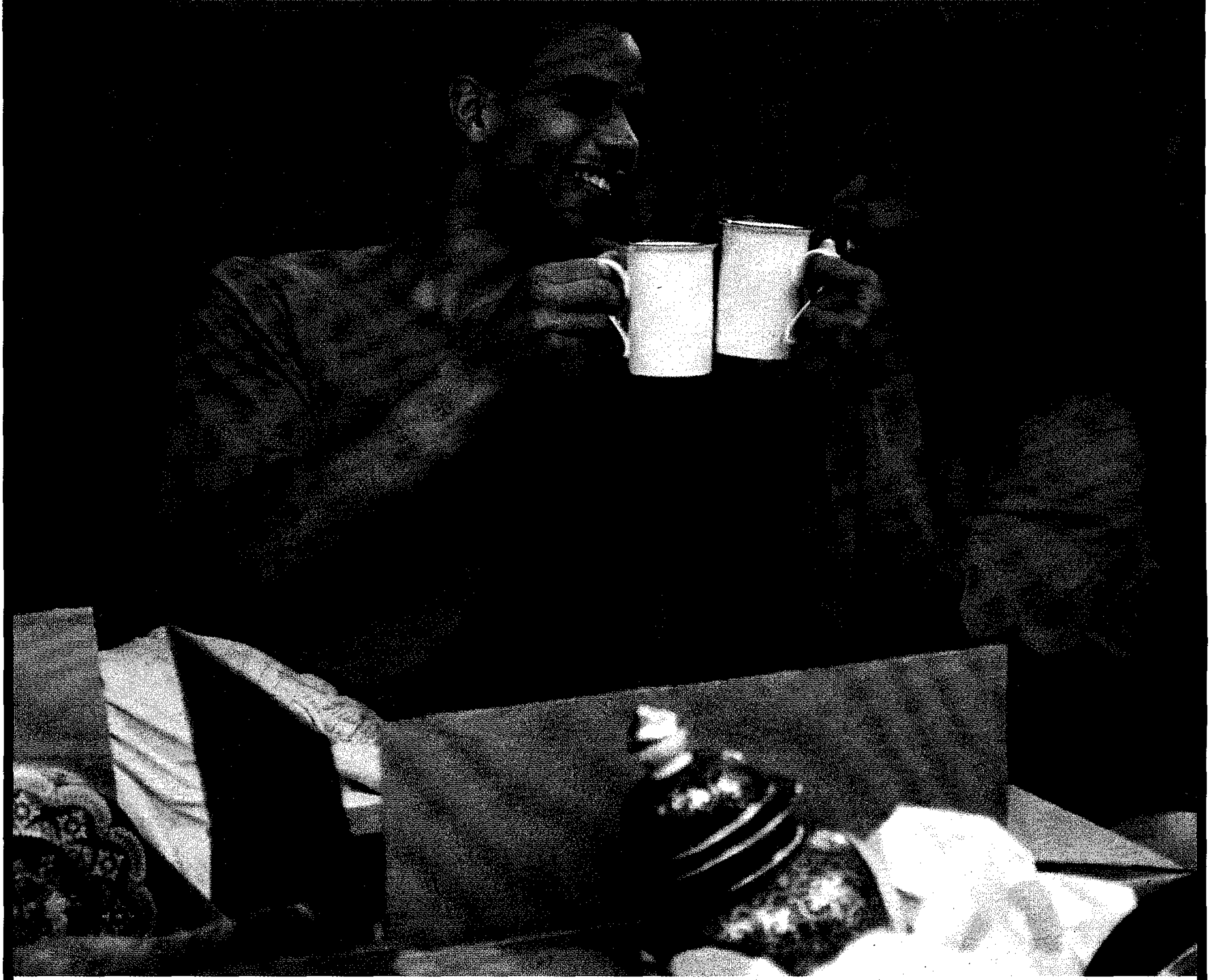
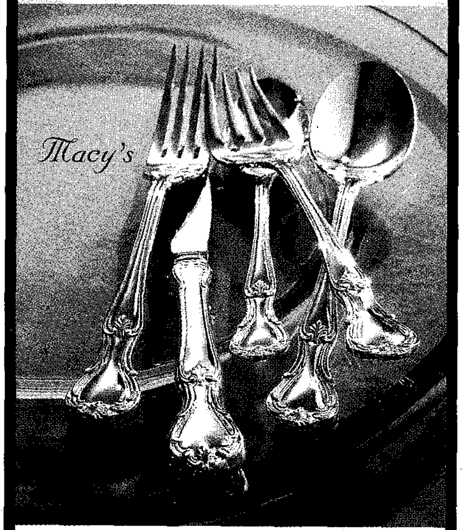


Arthur Tilley for FPG International

ROAD RULES FOR REGISTERING. *The concept sounds wonderful: walk around a store and choose whatever you want for your combined household. But in reality, the registry can be a daunting process, if you don't know the drill. The best way to prepare for registering is to approach it as you would any other part of your wedding: research your options, talk about your choices, and find the store or stores that best suit your tastes. The first step is deciding which store or stores best fits the bill. Then, take the following advice to heart before you grab your scanner gun and start zapping everything in sight:*

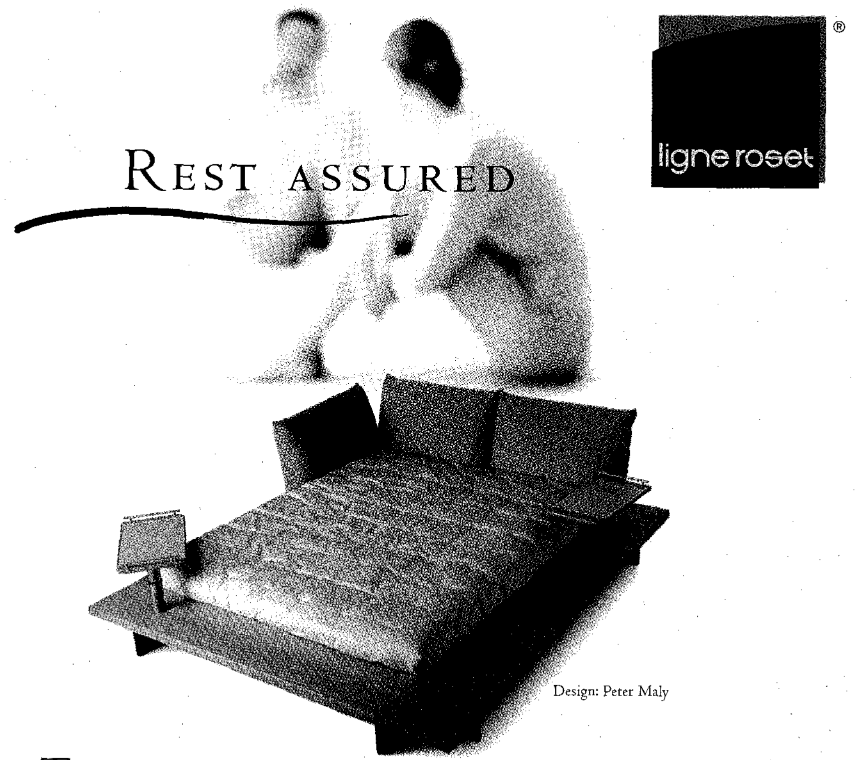
SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION



* **"Take a look at how you live every single day,"** suggests Debra Fritz, home decor consultant for **Target** (1-800-800-8800), which has eight stores in the New York metropolitan area. "What are your hobbies? What do you do in winter as opposed to summer. Once you look at your lifestyle, that will guide you to the kinds of things you'll register for."

* **"Register for items in a broad range of prices,"** advises Linda Lee, group vice president of the Bridal Registry at **Macy's** (151 W. 34th St., 1-800-44-WEDDING). "Remember, not all of your guests are working with the same budget–some family friends will want to be more generous, while others may be pooling their resources to buy you your gift."

* **Choose a store that reflects who you are.** "The bridal registry at **Felissimo** (10 W. 56th St., 247-5656 ext. 135) is a lifestyle resource for the modern couple-to-be as they create their new life together," says Lisa



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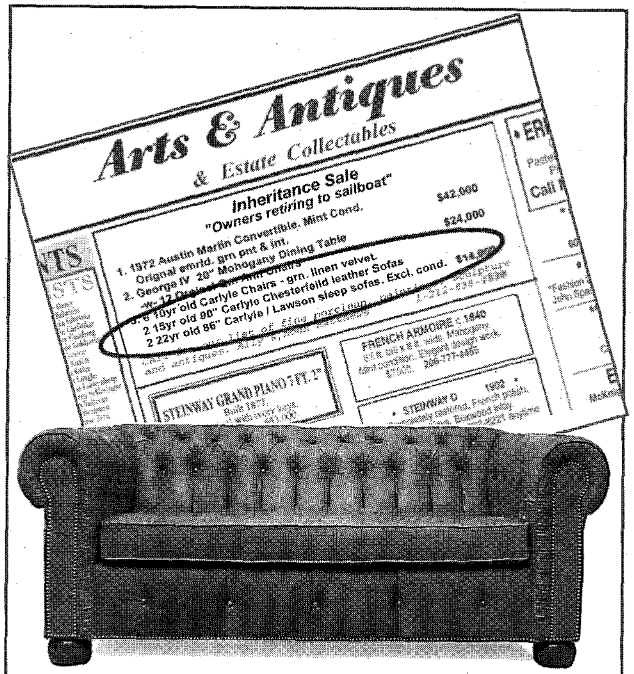

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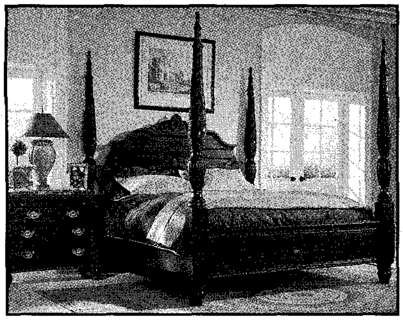

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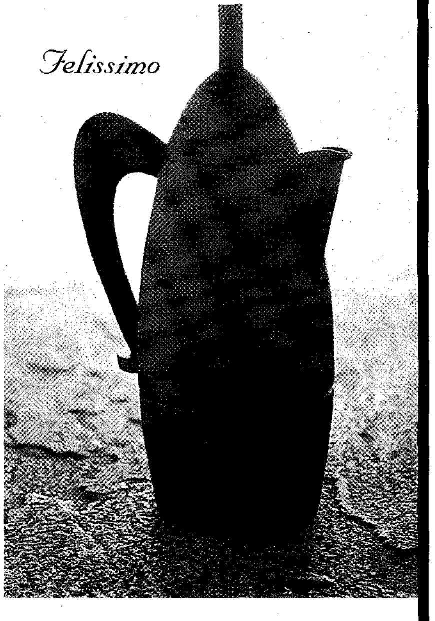
HOME FURNISHINGS



Kwock, a Felissimo spokesperson. The best way to describe the objects and furnishings that Felissimo carries is eclectic and innovative, such as feng shui bells and organic cotton towels.

* **Register for practical items.** "Believe it or not, the best thing we received is a coffee pot," says Elaine Wellman-Hamnett, 34, who registered at Macy's. Also popular at Macy's are mix-and-match Fiestaware dishes, for every day use or for entertaining. Adds Fritz from Target: "If you're just moving into a house, you may need a garden hose, sprinkler, paint brushes, and more. It is a big expense to get all those accessories for your home." At Target, you can add all of them and more to your Club Wedd registry.

* **Make registering easy.** Both Target and Macy's arm couples with scanner guns, which downloads registry information into a computer within seconds. Besides making the registry process faster, the scanner guns are a way to entice the groom-to-be to get involved. "My fiance had such fun using the scanner guns at Macy's," says Elizabeth Brown, 26, who registered there for her June 19, 1999 wedding. At Felissimo, each couple receives personalized attention from Fifi Loudon.

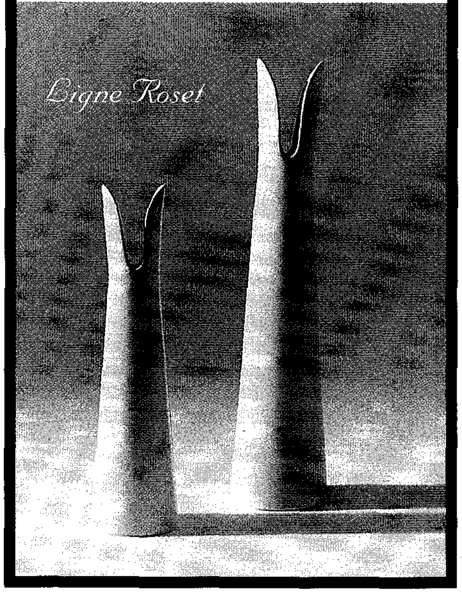
A HOME OF YOUR OWN

It used to be that the biggest challenge facing newlyweds was combining all their kitchen utensils and linens into one happy household. However, today's challenge is to fit all the his- and-her equipment under one roof. "We have really good space solutions," says Richard Broderson, VP of sales for **Foremost Furniture** (8 W. 30th St., 889-6347), a 50,000 square-foot store that stocks furnishings for almost every room and for almost every taste. "We can furnish your home right away, or faster than most store,s because we stock one-of-a-kind pieces or have items immediately." Couples can also register here; for more information, visit www.foremostfurniture.com.

The staff at **Ligne Roset** (1090 Third Ave., 794-2903; 200 Lexington Ave., 685-1099; 155 Wooster St., 253-5629), a preeminent French manufacturer of contemporary furnishings, is also adept at combining households.

"We help new couples navigate the development of their own sense of style," says general manager Laurie Messman. "Couples who shop here tend to be more independent and have an adventurous spirit."

Say you are moving in together and have nothing to put in your living room. Check out the clearance center at **Carlyle Convertibles** (122 W. 18th St., 675-3212), where sleep sofas are covered in discontinued fabrics or odd dye lots and are available for immediately delivery. Best of all, prices are 30% to 60%, off all the time. Low prices don't affect the quality, however. "There are pieces here with fabrics we import from France or custom-made pieces that clients decided not to buy," explains Darren deMatteo, president, who also oversees Carlyle's other two locations at 1056 Third Ave. and 1375 Third Ave.


Ligne Roset

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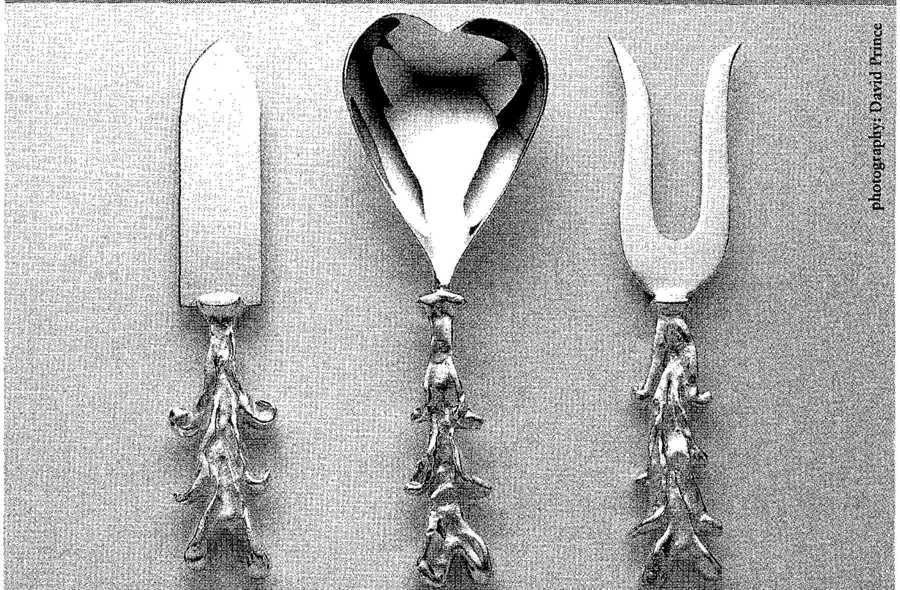
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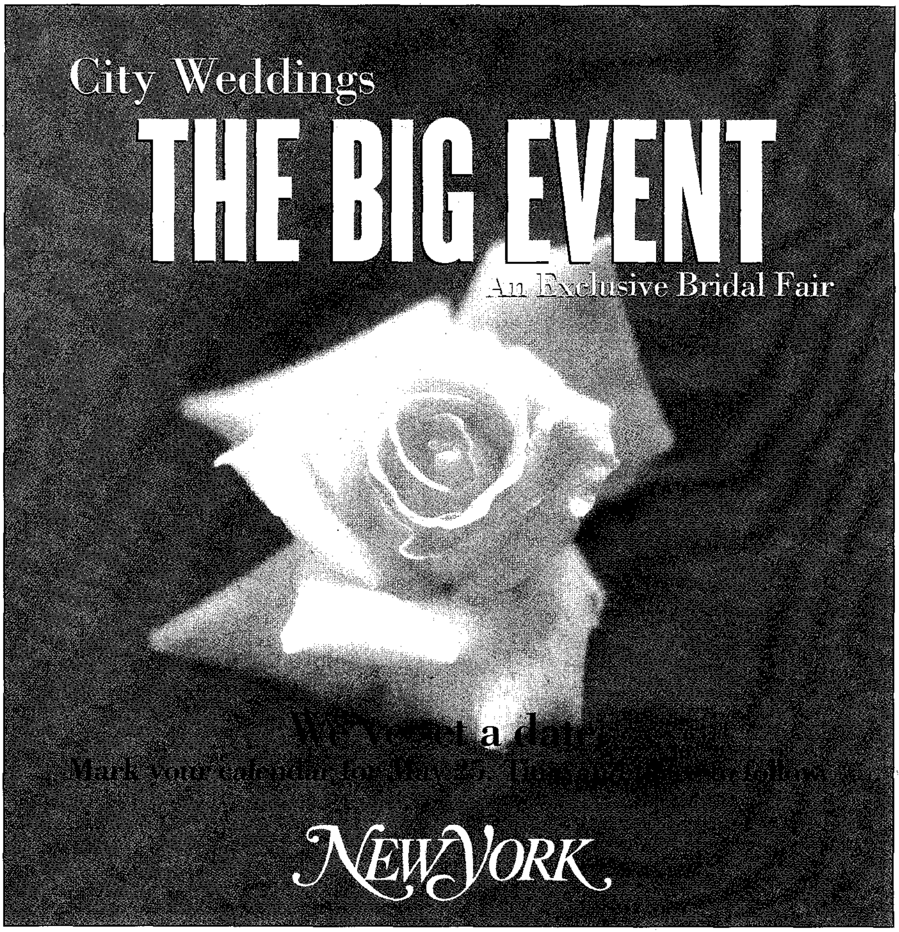
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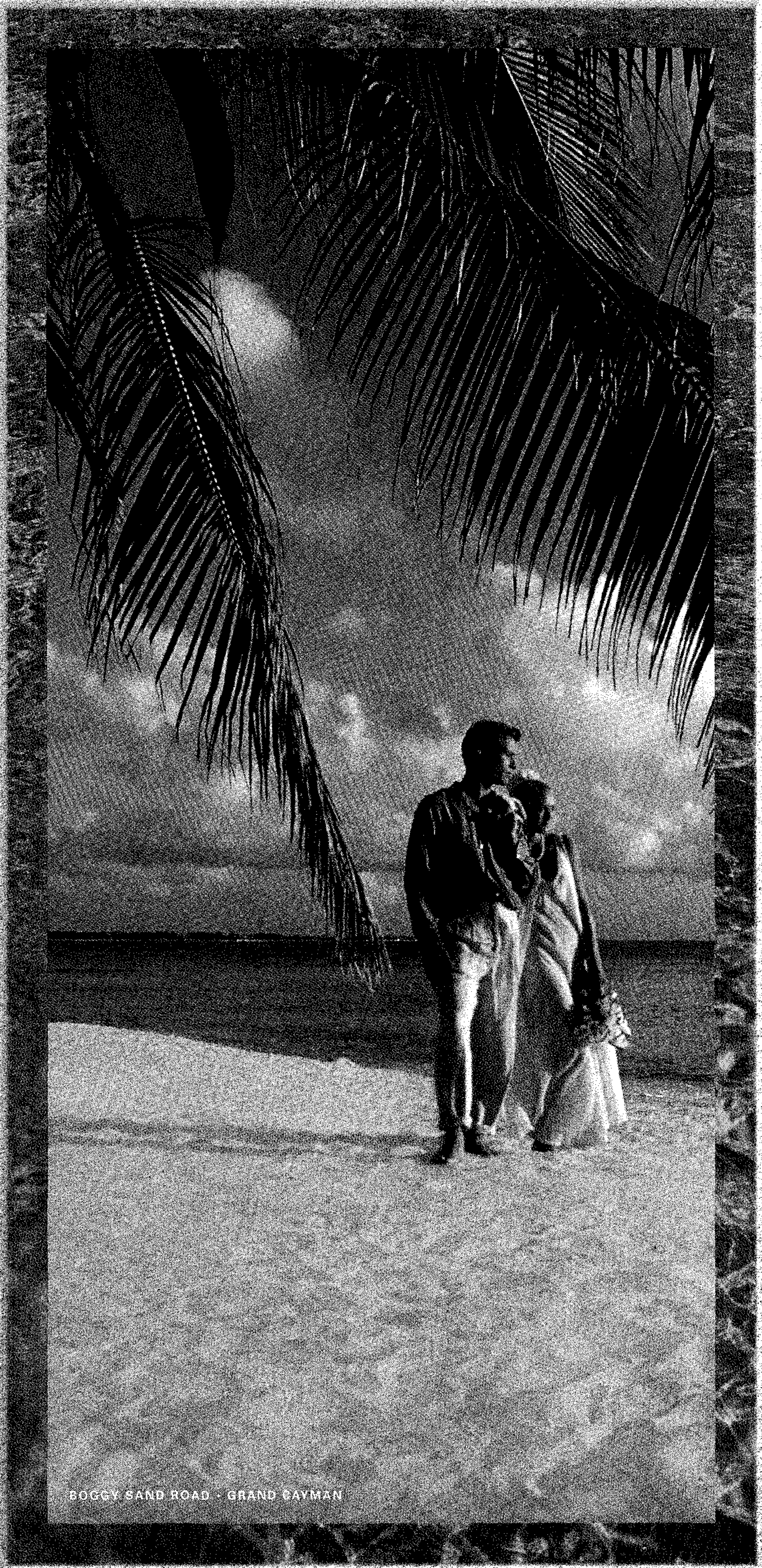
IMAGINE WALKING BAREFOOT DOWN A SANDY AISLE, palm trees swaying on both sides, as your groom awaits for you on the shore. You exchange vows as turquoise water shimmers in the background and waves lap at your feet. Sounds like a dream, right? Well, it can be a reality if you decide to have your wedding in an exotic locale, a hot new trend that has inspired many couples to forgo the traditional wedding for one on a tropical island.

At the all-inclusive **Couples** (1-800-COUPLES; www.couples.com) resorts in Jamaica (Ocho Rios and Negril), couples who stay six nights or longer get a free wedding to boot. So if you were planning on honeymooning at Couples, with its award-winning restaurants, beautifully appointed rooms and abundant land and water activities, why not have the quintessential wedding experience by getting married there? You can invite your friends and family to join you or escape to wedding bliss on your own.

Having a destination wedding in the **Cayman Islands** (1-800-346-3313; www.caymanislands.ky) is a snap! U.S. citizens are able to obtain a marriage license and get married the same day they arrive in this tropical paradise. These days on Grand Cayman, the largest island, it's not uncommon to see a group of wedding guests on a snorkeling excursion or shooting a round of golf—all enjoying a wedding vacation Cayman Islands' style, courtesy of the bride and groom.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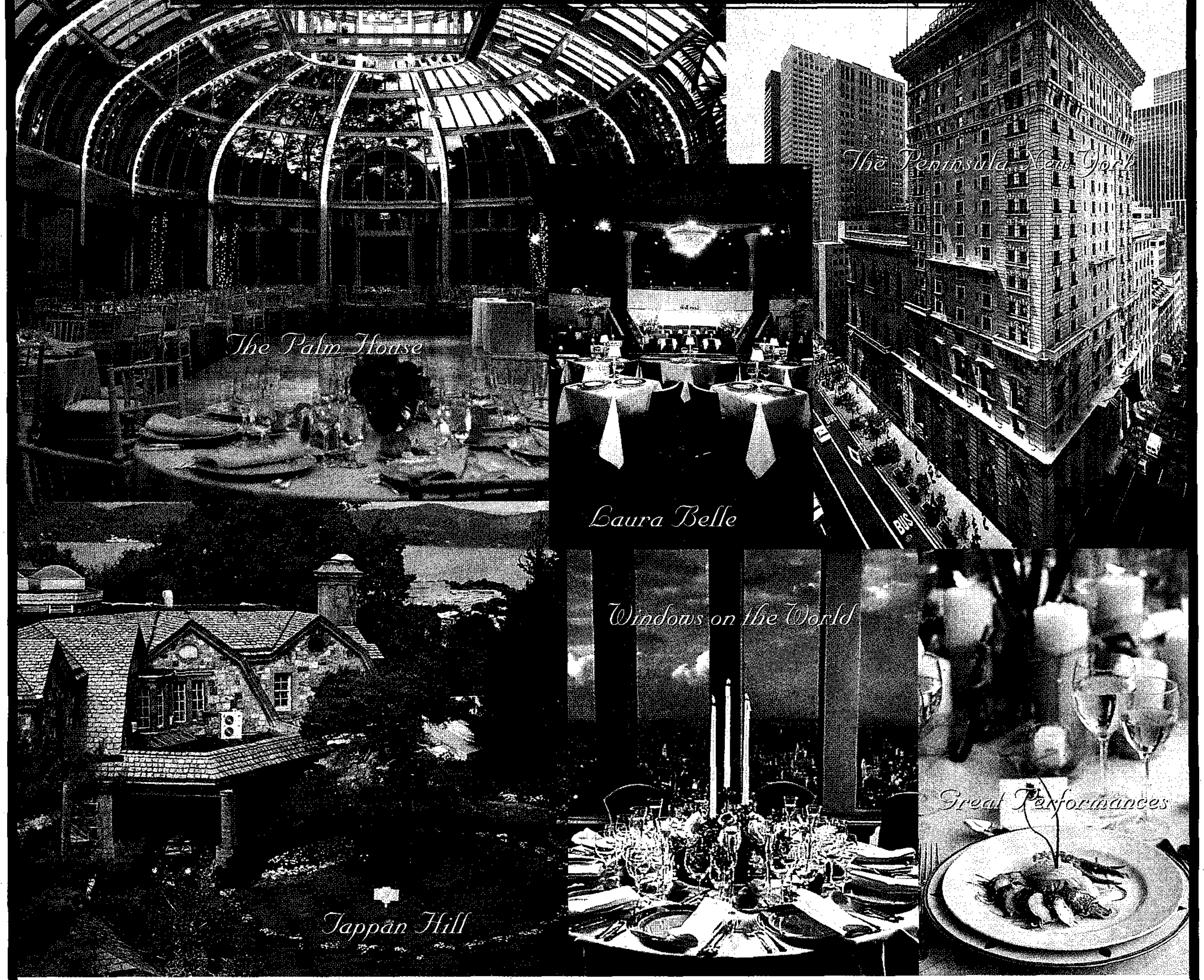
SETTING YOUR SITE



HERE'S THE PLAN

TODAY'S BRIDES AND GROOMS ARE CAREER-ORIENTED, BUSY PEOPLE WHO CAN'T DEVOTE ALL THEIR TIME TO WEDDING PLANNING. That's why they need the help of wedding event specialists. For example, Pamela Mitchell, 30, hired Jennifer Gilbert of **Save the Date** (155 W. 46th St., 333-DATE; www.savethedate.net), to pull together her April 25, 1998 wedding. "They helped coordinate many of the things I needed to do between 9 and 5 but couldn't because I was working," she says. This free event and wedding location service (locations pay Save the Date's fee) also acts as a full-service consultancy and can help time-starved couples find a band, photographers, and other wedding vendors.

The experts at **Event of the Year** (807-0907) find locations, caterers, photographers, entertainment, even the perfect dress, says Jackie Zirkman, a partner with Ellen Eskenazi. Zirkman and Eskenazi pride themselves on creating weddings that truly reflect the couple's personality. "We just did a wedding where the bride and groom were golfers, so we got them a golf-themed cake," recalls Jackie. The cake was shaped like a big golf ball, set on an edible green and decorated with tees. Creating an individualized wedding is crucial to Zirkman and Eskenazi, who say, "every wedding we do is unique."

Hotel Inter-Continental New York (111 E. 48th St., 906-3124) prides itself on individualized weddings–the hotel will host only one wedding at a time–and is getting into the plan-

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Hotel Inter-Continental

Glen Island Harbour Club

ning act by offering Bridal Style New York on March 20, from noon to 4 p.m. This upscale bridal show will feature more than 25 of the most renowned wedding specialists in business today. Included in the lineup are wedding cake master Sylvia Weinstock, bridal designer Michelle Roth & Co., the wonderful wares of Williams-Sonoma, and the fabulous photography of Sarah Merians Photography & Co. There will be an ongoing bridal fashion show as well as tastings from the Hotel Inter-Continental's chef. Any couple attending will become eligible to win a honeymoon at the Hotel Inter-Continental in Paris. Tickets are $20 and reservations are required. Call for details.

RECEPTION DIRECTORY

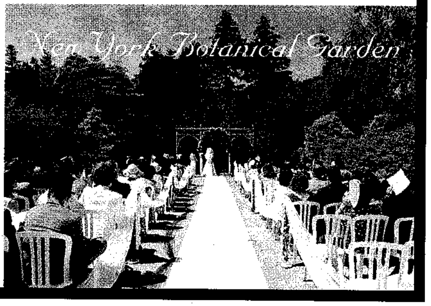
As a public relations executive who regularly plans special events, Margie Cader knows more than the average person about party planning. She also has the inside track to great spaces. Yet, when she got engaged to husband Marc Heiman and began searching for the ideal location for their August 22, 1998 wedding, she couldn't find a place where she could live out her dream wedding. "We must have looked at 30 places in Long Island, Westchester, and Manhattan," Margie recalls, "but nothing fit the bill."

Then the couple stumbled upon **Glen Island Harbour Club** in New Rochelle, which is situated on a private island at the edge of the Long Island Sound. At the time Margie and Marc visited, it was still undergoing a major renovation. But the couple was willing to take a leap of faith, and, as Margie says, "it was the most beautiful place we'd seen. It was on the water, it was new, and we said, 'This is it.' " They were not disappointed. "People who came to my wedding said it was the best food they'd ever had at a wedding," recalls Margie. "Plus, with everyone arriving at sunset, it was the most spectacular view. There's no comparison to this location. In fact, being on the water gave the Cader/Heiman wedding an almost ethereal feel. "At night they have lights under the water, so it looked like we were floating," says Margie, adding, "the staff took such good care of us."

There are numerous wedding sites in the New York metropolitan area that will also take good care of their brides and grooms. Whether your desire is to get married with a water view, like Margie and Marc, or in an intimate New York restaurant, read on to discover some of the best places to celebrate the union of your marriage:

Abigail Kirsch at The New York Botanical Garden
200th St. and Southern Blvd.
New York City 718-220-0300
The Garden Terrace Room brings the glories of the Garden inside with magnificent new murals. The setting and the food of Abigail Kirsch is outstanding. Just 25 minutes from Manhattan. Accommodates up to 350 for a seated dinner and dancing, 600 for a cocktail reception.

Abigail Kirsch at Tappan Hill
81 Highland Ave., Tarrytown, NY
914-631-3030



Celebrate!

Why have an ordinary event when you can have an extraordinary one! A beautiful island setting with spectacular water views and even your very own fireworks on Long Island Sound. Glen Island Harbour Club, the most exciting new location in the New York area.

Once known as the "swing palace" where the music of Glenn Miller and Tommy Dorsey captivated the hearts of America, the Glen Island Harbour Club has been completely transformed into the most magnificent location in the New York area.

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Call 914-636-6500 to see this very special place that is just minutes from Manhattan, Connecticut and New Jersey. The Glen Island Harbour Club ... the perfect place to celebrate.

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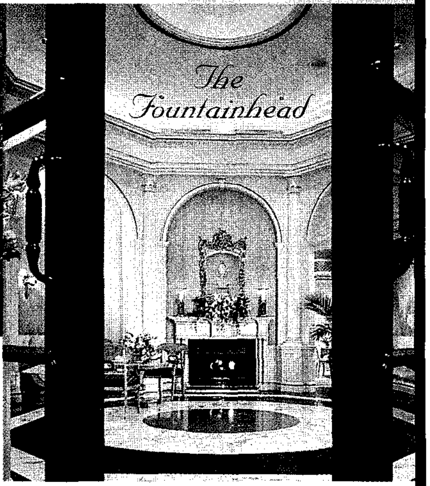
Barbetta Restaurant



The landmark mansion overlooking The Hudson River on an estate once owned by Mark Twain. Romantic setting, outdoor ceremony areas, accommodates 290 (dinner, dancing) to 600 (cocktail reception). Forty-five minutes from Manhattan, with the famous food and impeccable service of Abigail Kirsch.

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363-5488
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Barbetta Restaurant
321 W. 46th St.   246-9171
Woody Allen chose the Barbetta Garden in which to film the wedding reception in his movie *Celebrity*. Barbetta is one of New York's most outstanding wedding sites, with its romantic garden exuberantly verdant and flowering with the scented blooms of magnolia, wisteria, jasmine, and gardenia. The garden leads to to Barbetta's spectacular palazzo-like interior decorated with 18th century Italian antiques.

The Boathouse in Central Park
off East 72nd Street and Fifth Avenue
988-0576 ext. 4
The Boathouse prides itself on delicious cuisine, breathtaking views, a professional banquet staff, and even authentic Venetian gondola rides for the happy couple and their guests. Enhance your special event by surrounding yourself with the lush landscape of beautiful Central Park. The Boathouse is open year round.

The Fountainhead
55 Quaker Ridge Rd., New Rochelle, NY
914-235-4400
A $5-million renovation has made this luxurious catering facility feel even more like a private mansion. Its charm includes a glass-enclosed atrium, marble foyer, waterfall, and working fireplaces. The Fountainhead specializes in creating elegant custom events for up to 500 people.

Glen Island Harbour Club
Glen Island Park, New Rochelle, NY
914-636-6500
This secluded location is now the tri-state's premier waterfront location. Uniquely located on an Island with a park setting, Glen Island offers dramatic water views from every corner, New York skyline bridges in the distance, and a storybook chapel. All this and fabulous food will make your wedding day truly special.

Great Performances at St. Moritz
50 Central Park South   446-5523/6
The St. Moritz, with its stunning three-mile view overlooking Central Park from the Sky Garden and Terrace Penthouse rooms, is the latest addition to Great Performance's roster of quality special event venues. The St. Moritz can accommodate parties of up to 350 guests. Great Performances, one of the most highly regarded caterers in the New York market, celebrates its 20th anniversary in 1999.

Laura Belle
120 W. 43rd St.   819-1000
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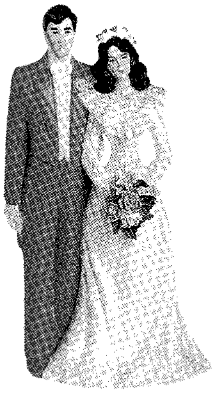

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The Mark
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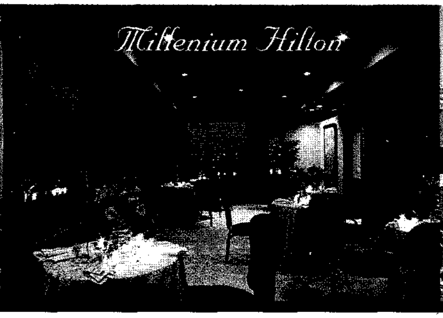
Wedding guests ascend to the private, 3,500 square-foot banquet area on the second floor of this landmark hotel via a spiral stairway. It is sub- divisible into six rooms serving 350 for banquets or 180 for sit-down dinners.

Millenium Hilton
55 Church St. 693-2001
Located downtown, adjacent to the World Trade Center, the Millenium Hilton offers sweeping views of New York Harbor, Ellis Island, and the Statue of Liberty. The 55th-floor Presidential Suite creates a setting of sophistication and luxury, perfect for a wedding. The catering team works with each couple to personalize a gourmet menu. From dining in the Taliesin to the indoor pool, The Millenium Hilton is "the class act of downtown."

The New York Palace
455 Madison Ave. 303-7766
Palatial setting in midtown Manhattan that incorporates the landmark Villard Houses and the photogenic Courtyard, The New York Palace features the oval-shaped Villard Ballroom and companion Reid Salon for 10 to 400 people. Couples who have their wedding here can choose a separate room for their wedding ceremony. They also receive complete catering and reception planning services and inventive menus from traditional to Mediterranean to Le Cirque 2000, as well as a complimentary suite for their wedding night.

The Palm House at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden
1000 Washington Ave., Brooklyn
718-398-2400; www.palmhouse.com
The setting is unlike any other in New York. The Brooklyn Botanic Garden's 52 acres, includ-



The New York Palace

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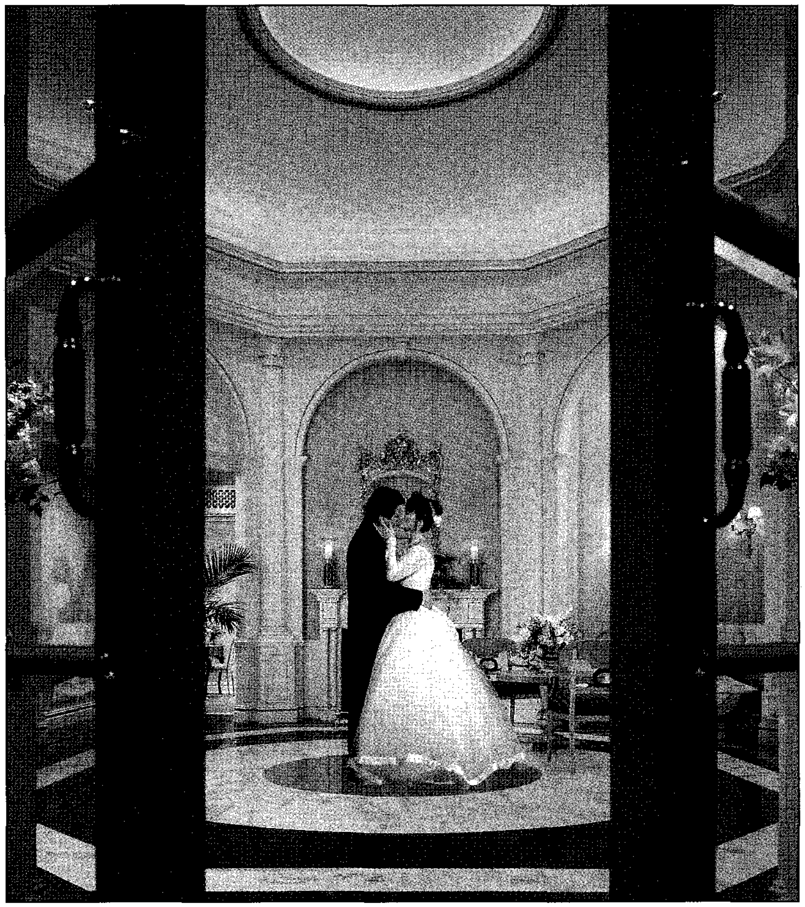
ing the rose garden, Japanese garden, and the Victorian greenhouse, designed by Sanford White, can all be the setting for a memorable wedding and reception. The magic of the setting is enhanced by the American- style cuisine created exclusively for each bride and groom by Charles, Sally and Charles Krause, Inc. caterers.

The Park Restaurant
109 E. 56 St. 750-5656
The Park has 30-foot ceilings beautifully decorated with inlaid wood and gold leaf and features French-influenced American cuisine. Owner John Scotto works individually with each couple. The Park's five rooms can accommodate weddings and ceremonies both large and small.

The Peninsula New York
700 Fifth Ave.
956-2888, 1-800-262-9467
For intimate and elegant weddings, The Peninsula New York is an ideal venue. All of the hotel's banquet rooms are newly redesigned and the largest, La Grande Salle, accommodates up to 120 guests. From May through October, the hotel's popular Pen-Top Bar & Terrace, with its sweeping views of the Manhattan skyline, offers a dramatic setting for any affair. Indulge in pre- or post-wedding relaxation and rejuvenation at the rooftop Peninsula Spa.

Pier Sixty at Chelsea Piers
23rd St. and the Hudson River
336-6060
Spectacular new space right on the Hudson River with floor-to-ceiling windows offering dazzling river views and fine architectural details reminiscent of great ocean liners' grand ballrooms. Accommodates up to 1,200 people for a seated dinner and dancing, all under the aegis of the noted Abigail Kirsch, whose food is world famous.



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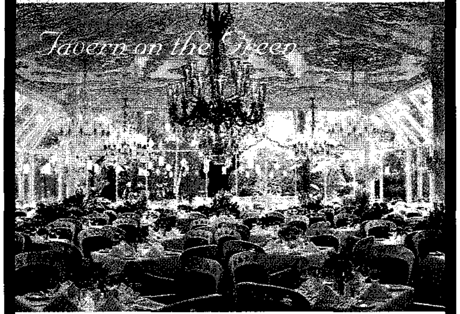

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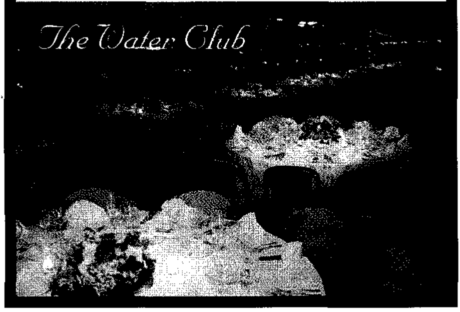

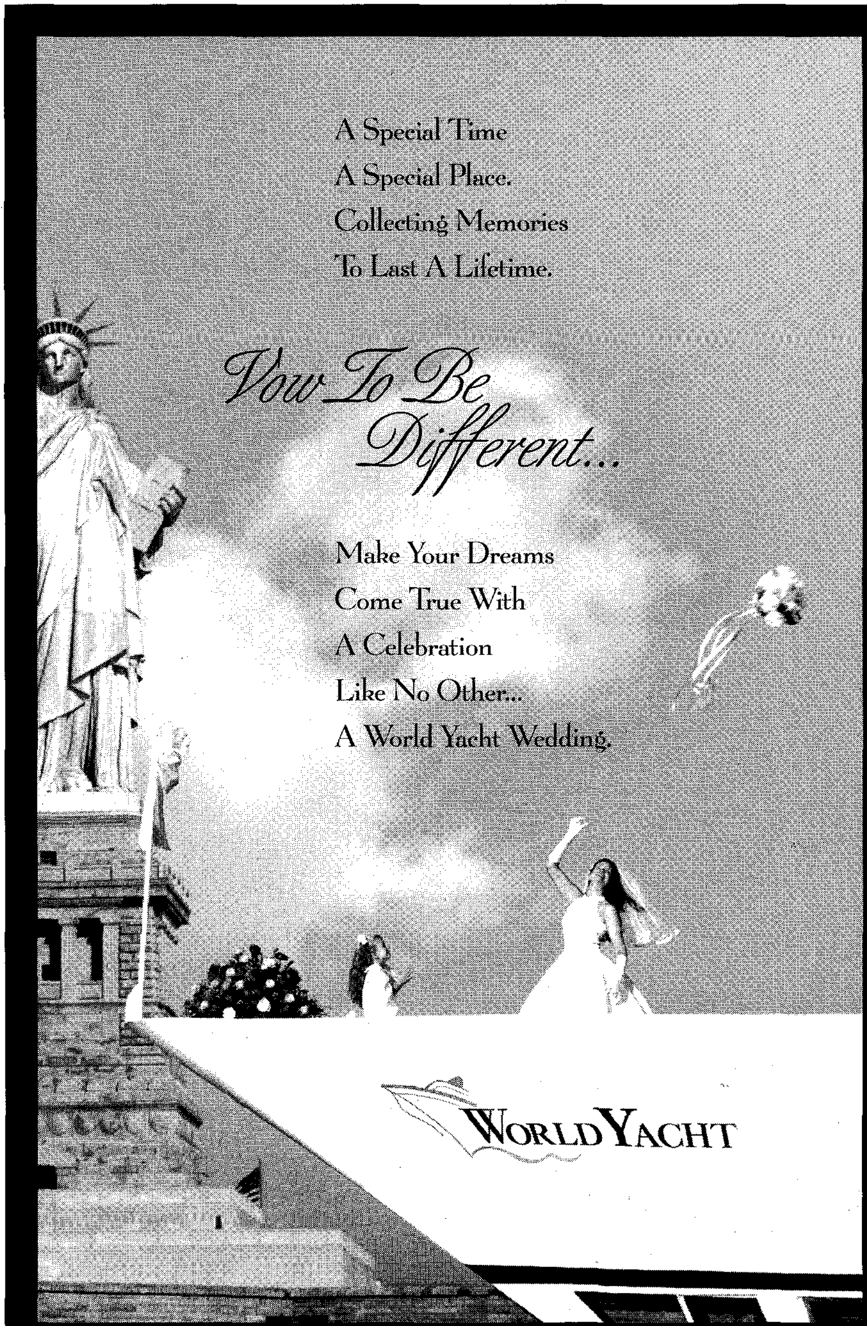

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PETER RAINER

Out of Memory

When hypnosis turns a computer drone into Mr. Cool, 'Office Space' suggests a screwball comedy in the great Hollywood tradition—even if it's not fully realized.

Butt-head lives: Jennifer Aniston and Ron Livingston in Mike Judge's *Office Space.*

Office Space OPENS with a massive traffic jam in which the drivers, encased in their cars, give play to their secret selves. The straight-arrow-looking Peter (Ron Livingston) comes apart; meek Michael (David Herman) blasts rap music but is careful to lock his doors when a black peddler wedges into an adjoining lane. It turns out these guys are computer programmers en route to their jobs at the monolithic Initech Corporation. This daily commuter snarl may be their only occasion to blow off steam. Slotted into look-alike cubicles at work, they peep over the partitions like rodents, sniffing the air for danger. Locking eyes with their boss Bill (Gary Cole) invites trouble: He'll ask you to work the weekend.

This is the first live-action feature from writer-director Mike Judge, creator of *Beavis and Butt-head* and co-creator of the TV series *King of the Hill.* He gives the film an uncluttered, almost abstract look that allows us to home in on the visual jokes, the way we might in a Jacques Tati film. That Initech office complex is so sterile it's unnerving; it's the prototype for every soul-deadening job we've ever had. Gazing into it is like staring at the floor plans for your prison block.

Judge is sharp about the jangles and subterfuges of office politics. He knows how to decode the double-speak. When a team of efficiency experts shows up at the office to interview the staff, you don't need to be told that layoffs are pending. The drones at Initech are preternaturally sensitive to upper-management bull; they always know when the next punch is coming, and the best they can do is take it full on the chin. Judge gets the corporate details just right: the flat lighting that isolates the wage slaves as if they were lab specimens; the soft tread on acrylic carpet of slit-eyed company honchos; the chirpy secretary whose endlessly repeated telephone greeting has turned her into a human tape loop. *Office Space* is a white-collar comedy for the generation of lowered expectations. The toilers at Initech are the children and grandchildren of the Organization Men of the fifties. Spending their lives staring into a computer screen, they have to fight off becoming computers themselves. For most, it's a battle long since lost.

The standout rebel is Peter, who starts out in such dire straits that he finally seeks relief from an "occupational hypnotherapist." "Is there some way you can zonk me out?" he asks during his session, and then, just after Peter goes into a trance, the therapist suddenly keels over dead. Locked into his hypno-bliss, Peter is a changed dude. Showing up late to work, or not at all, he's so cavalier in his unconcern that, instead of being fired, he's recommended for an upper-level position. It's a rich joke: The less he cares, the more he's valued. But Peter is no sellout. He devises a scheme with Michael and another co-worker, Samir (Ajay Naidu), to bilk Initech, and he also enlists a newfound waitress girlfriend, Joanna (Jennifer Aniston), who has her own job woes. (She works at a place called Chotchkie's, where her boss, played by Judge, has criticized her for not pinning enough "flair"—personally chosen buttons and pins and whatnot—to her uniform.)

Judge has a good eye for casting—a cartoonist's eye. The people in *Office Space* are live-action versions of his animated nerds and creeps and blubberers. One of them, Milton (Stephen Root), is actually based on a character from Judge's animation work. He's portrayed in the movie as a whimpering poor soul with matted hair who keeps getting marginalized until he finally ends up in an unlighted cubicle in the basement. Laid off, he refuses to leave—he's Melville's Bartleby the

Photograph by Van Redin/Twentieth Century Fox.

Scrivener for the Dilbert generation. Boss Bob is so unctuous and androidlike, so boneless, that he might have been fashioned from poured plastic. And then there's Michael, chinless and mop-haired, who looks like a geekier Bill Gates, and whose last name, Bolton, compounds his agonies. (On first acquaintance, people are always asking him if he is related to the singer, whom Michael detests.) Judge isn't being especially cruel in accentuating the peculiarities of these people. It's just how he sees things. He's an equal-opportunity caricaturist who enjoys tickling himself.

Office Space is so enjoyable that you wish it were even better. It's targeted for the bright-young-adult audience, and that's fine but also limiting. Until now, there hasn't been a comedy about the attitudes of white-collar kids mired in corporate purgatory; the subject is so good that you want to see it blown up big-time. Judge is a bit like Joanna the waitress—he could benefit from a bit more flair, too. Once the scheme to bilk Initech is set in motion, the off-kilter humor flattens into a take-this-job-and-shove-it thing, and the ending seems pooped-out. Judge may not be fully aware of how wildly talented he is, which, in a Hollywood culture swarming with talentless blowhards, makes him something of an anomaly. He has it in him to make classic comedies. The nut-brain *Office Space* is a good warm-up act to the main event.

In Brief: October Sky, ABOUT A COAL MINER'S son who becomes a rocket scientist, is an inspirational drama without a whit of inspiration. The visuals, the dialogue, the sentiments all seem lifted right out of the *Boy Scout Handbook*. The film is supposed to be based on a true story, but who can believe a minute of it? That's the problem with mediocrity—it makes even verity seem fraudulent. Homer Hickam (Jake Gyllenhaal, in a respectable performance)—whose father (Chris Cooper, ditto) is the no-nonsense mine supervisor in the company town of Coalwood, West Virginia—doesn't want to spend his life underground inhaling black dust. Inspired by the recent Sputnik launch, he reads up on rockets and, enlisting three high-school mates, starts boosting his own. Crude cherry-bomb contraptions soon give way to smarter stuff, and eventually Homer and the boys win top prize in the National Science Fair and college scholarships. We're supposed to applaud Homer for rising above his roots, but the effect is condescending. It's as if the filmmakers were saying, *If these hillbillies could do it, why not you?*

Peter Rainer's 1998–99 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

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BOOKS WALTER KIRN

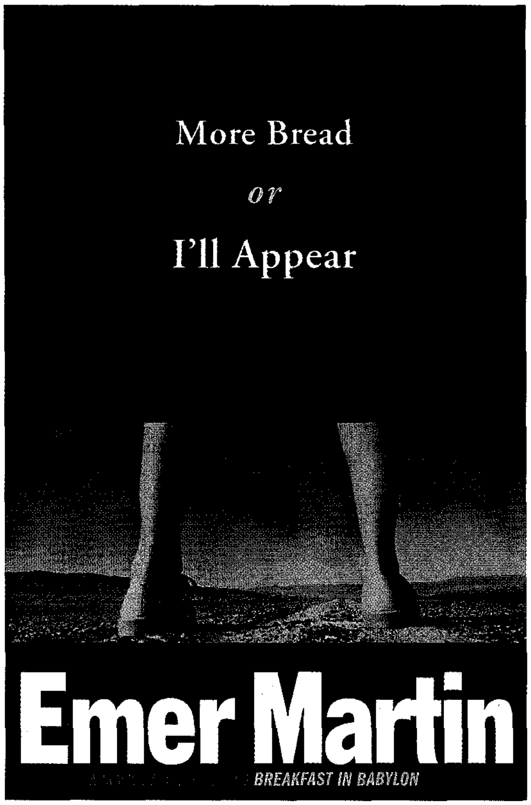
Escape From Ireland

Out of old-fashioned Irish literary stock—crazy father, long-suffering mother, many restless children—Emer Martin makes a modern, fast-paced (if slightly woolly) novel.

More Bread or I'll Appear
BY EMER MARTIN
Houghton Mifflin; 256 pages; $23

IF THERE WAS EVER A SUREFIRE FORMULA FOR THE short, naturalistic novel, it's this: a big Irish Catholic family and a curse. Throw in scheming priests, a blighted countryside, sexual repression, and poverty, and you have all the classic elements of Celtic domestic tragicomedy, as durable a genre as the detective story and one that's almost as hard to put fresh twists on.

Still, that's the challenge that Emer Martin sets herself in *More Bread or I'll Appear,* her second novel, and though she starts off with all the old ingredients, she manages to make the dish her own by dint of sheer, messy energy and nerve. Only half in control of her material, and possessed by ambitions that never quite add up, Martin takes her literary inheritance and spends it like crazy in a dizzy spree.



She begins at the Irish beginning, as old as Genesis. Poppa's mad, tucked away in an asylum. Momma's poor and pious and put-upon. The children run wild in a roaring pack. Behind them, a grinding national history. Ahead, a gloomy future. Above, the Church. Martin fills in this background with lightning speed, spanning years in a sentence or two and cutting so quickly between family members that their features end up on one another's faces.

Except for Patrick, the only boy child, mother Molly's four girls have challenging Old World names that seem to come from a ballad by Yeats and grant their bearers an exotic allure and a sense of cultural distinctiveness: Keelin, Orla, Siobhan, Aisling. Martin is out to make myth, such names suggest; to turn on the free-flowing tap of mystic murk that is every Irish writer's birthright. Uninhibited by America's multiculturalism, which now demands that no one group ever be allowed to stand for all, Irish novelists still feel free—and possibly even duty-bound—to abstract from the family to the race.

The story takes off with a solemn maternal command, another quasi-legendary touch. In search of jobs and kicks, Molly's children have scattered around the globe, except for responsible, modest Keelin, the keeper of family solidarity. When wild, sexy Aisling, the red-haired prodigal, drops out of sight while visiting Japan, Molly sends Keelin to find her and fetch her home. The funds for this mission come from Uncle Oscar, a gay New York priest who in turn is sponsored by a wealthy Jesuit lover. In a book concerned with big ideas and archetypes, it's fair to say that this pair of sleek male clerics, consumed by their love of opera and fine wine, represent an eternal, detached male overclass whose power stems only accidentally from the Vatican. In Martin's story, women and children are pawns moved about by cynical supermen untouchable in their lofty self-absorption.

Sex, in every costume and combination, is the hot wind that fills the novel's sails. Keelin's global wild-goose chase provides a veritable Michelin guide to international eroticism. In Japan, she meets up with cross-dressers and masochists and learns that Aisling's been passing as a man while bedding every lost soul in sight. In America, Keelin finds one of Oscar's old lovers, now bedridden with AIDS, and in Mexico she and Orla go on holiday with a carload of macho lotharios.

Everywhere, Aisling is one step ahead of her, leaving a trail of Irish sensuality and spreading a gospel of polymorphous perversity mixed with a sort of world-beat socialism. Aisling is a wandering prophet, it seems, "history's escapee," but Martin lays on her significance too thick, giving her one too many speeches that sound like particularly pretentious excerpts from an old Sinead O'Connor interview: "We aren't seeking to evolve," Aisling says at one point, "but forces of environment challenge us and develop us beyond our plain of dreams. Life is infinite when perceived as a continuum, hollow and brutal when we take it in chunks."

Fortunately, Aisling moody musings aren't central to the book. Martin's real business is cramming Keelin's

Sex, in every costume and combination, is the hot wind that fills the novel's sails.

journey full of hectic incident and color, and the tale that results has the pleasing, random bustle of a well-stocked ant farm at feeding time.

As Molly's children cross paths around the world, towing friends and lovers and hangers-on, tending the sick and getting sick themselves, and periodically going home to Ireland for morale-boosting visits with the matriarch, a startling image of transience takes shape. Between telephones, credit cards, cheap airline flights, and the permeability of national borders, one family can truly inhabit the whole world these days, meeting, parting, and reuniting with divine disregard for continent and time zone.

Molly's family's miniature diaspora, and the larger diaspora of Irish youth, is a peculiarly modern phenomenon: experience gathered, sifted, and repatriated in a constant, open-ended cycle that's both liberating and confusing. Home is no longer where people come to rest but the motion created by their restlessness.

And this is one restless family that Martin gives us. The children share their father's "doubting disease," identified explicitly at one point as obsessive-compulsive disorder. They ritually recite odd thoughts. They worry about left-on ovens and repeatedly return to rooms to make sure doors are locked.

Patrick, who wears rubber gloves to thwart infection, manages to capitalize on his illness by learning to count cards in blackjack during a trip to Las Vegas, but eventually the malady destroys him, sending him back to the scene of a crime that, if he could have brought it off, might have rendered him independent at last. But for this family, independence is a pipe dream, and the same goes for all of Ireland, perhaps. Bogged down for so long in the cultic rhythms of nature and religion, oppression and rebellion, the entire country may suffer from OCD.

Irishness itself is a disease. That's Martin's diagnosis, at least, and she offers compelling fictional evidence for it. Joining Keelin in her quest is Orla's illegitimate son, Shawn, who's run away from the wealthy American family he was placed with at birth by Oscar, the priest. Shawn is a scab-picking hive of tics, constructing huge, elaborate "nests" from scraps of thread and street litter. He's building a little homeland in his head, one that's always disintegrating on him, and though he's never set foot upon the island where he was conceived, what spurs him on is a dim, ancestral memory. To go back, to go back. It's the endless Celtic pathology. And the world being round, as Martin's novel reminds us, even to go away is to go back. ▬

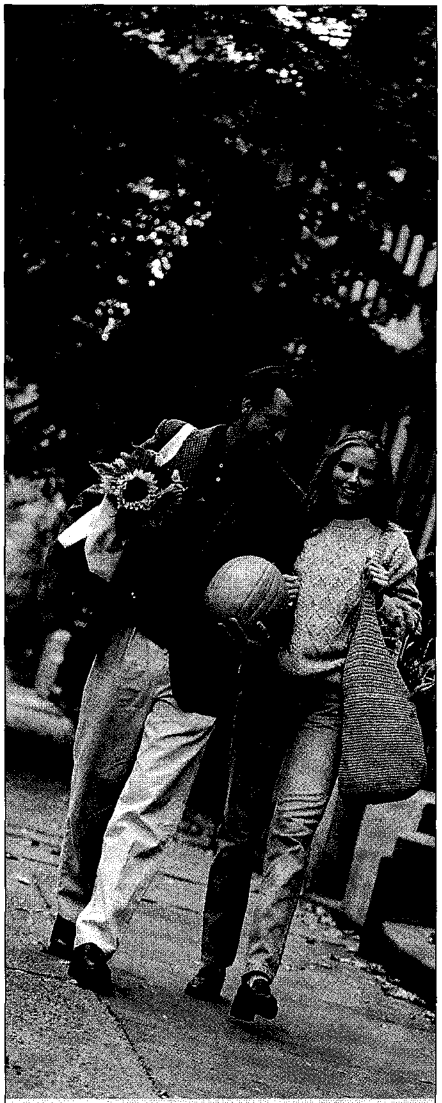
Walter Kirn's 1997–99 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

SHORTS

A SOPHOMORE AT JOHNS HOPKINS, DREW Burke, the main character in Ben Neihart's **Burning Girl** (Rob Weisbach Books; $24), likes patchouli, pot, Neil Young, Saabs, Sylvia Plath, and sex—all of which are supplied in plentiful quantities by his cool best friends, Jake and his older sister Bahar. Drew met Jake at a Jewel concert in Hershey Park; afterward, the two boys groped each other in the backseat of Jake's Volvo. Everyone's just mellowing out in their cozy late-teen world until Neihart foists a V. C. Andrews–esque plot of rape, incest, murder, and double cross upon them. Too deep inside Drew's head, Neihart allows this struggle with the deception perpetuated upon him by the siblings to take over the narrative, often expressed in italics: "*Do I believe? Hadn't he almost confessed? Hadn't he? . . . What do I believe? Am I strong enough to believe anything?*" VANESSA GRIGORIADIS

IN **South of the Border, West of the Sun** (ALFRED A. Knopf; $22), Haruki Murakami applies his patented Japanese magic realism—minimalist, smooth, and transcendently odd—to a charming tale of childhood love lost. The conspiracies here are at a personal level, emphasizing the book's slightness in comparison to his last novel, *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle.* Hajime is happily married and runs a jazz club, but on the street one day he spots his first love, Shimamoto, a slightly lame girl who once shared his preference for Liszt. After leading him to a coffee shop, she vanishes. The rest of the novel explores, but does not reveal, why she flees. As in much of Murakami's work, the mystical denouement leaves you with more mood than satisfaction—the perfect mood, in fact, for listening to Hajime's favorite song, Duke Ellington's "Star-Crossed Lovers." ALEXANDRA LANGE

IN KEVIN CANTY'S SECOND NOVEL, **Nine Below Zero** (Nan A. Talese/Doubleday; $24), aimless, depressed Justine is barely getting over a nervous breakdown precipitated by the death of her young son when she meets aimless, depressed Marvin, who is barely getting over his drug addiction. By chance, Marvin saves Justine's grandfather's life, giving her the excuse she's been waiting for to flee her marriage in Oregon and set up camp at her ailing grandfather's house in Montana, where she wallows in grief and adultery. The characters plod through their lives, often communicating in clichés when they are able to communicate at all: The line "That's not what I meant" runs through the text like a refrain. But Canty's a good enough storyteller to make us care about these disenchanted, apathetic people and their clumsy attempts to connect and make sense of their muddled recollections of their past selves. ARIEL LEVY



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THEATER JOHN SIMON

Sisterhood Is Comical

Paula Vogel movingly conjures sibling competition—and still manages to get the laugh; Martin Crimp travesties Molière (and doesn't do much for Uma either).

PAULA VOGEL'S NOT-QUITE-NEW **The Mineola Twins** (originally *The Minnesota Twins*) is neither top- nor bottom-drawer Vogel, though it is written in good part from her drawers. The mind and the crotch have harmoniously collaborated in this her most openly lesbian play, and what emerges is more than a campy piece in which three women play six parts, three of them male.

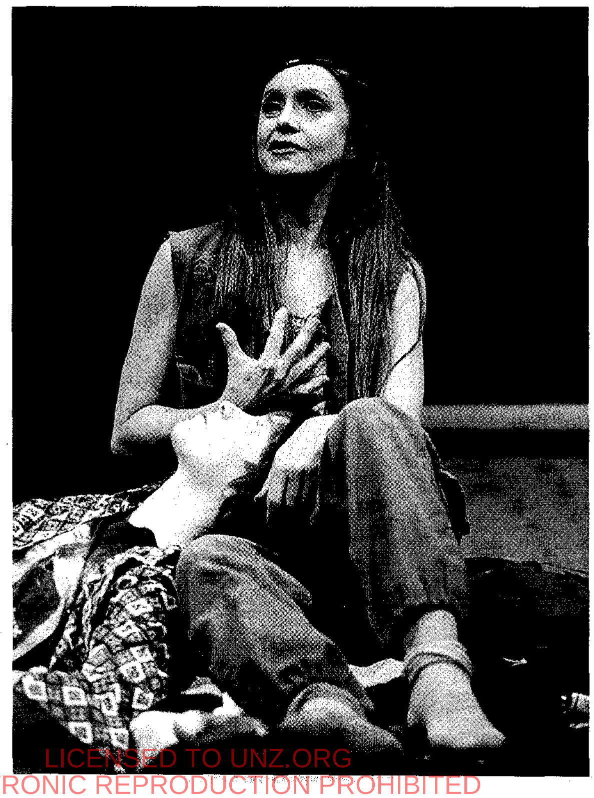
It is about sisterhood—literally and figuratively—and how very different, indeed antithetical, women may bond together despite their animosities, and what they can give to, as well as get from, one another's male offspring. It proclaims sisterhood beautiful even at its most acrimonious, and that someday, though not quite yet, all women may live in peace together despite divergent sexualities and warring ideologies.

Fundamentally, it is the story of how the twins Myrna and Myra, from a middle-class home in Mineola, fared through the Eisenhower, Nixon, and Bush eras. It is about the internecine hatred of these near-identical opposites: Myrna, conventional, bourgeois, reactionary; Myra, rebellious, promiscuous, radical. And yet somehow alike. All through high school, young womanhood, and early middle age, they—sometimes bitterly, sometimes cheerfully—detest each other (including stealing each other's sons and lovers) while also being joined at deeper than skin, or even bone, level.

Vogel writes farce here, and the jokes come thick and fast. They are based on true knowledge of the periods chronicled—of their mores, mentalities, media, language, and artifacts. Many of the gags are recycled or ersatz, often fished out of waters depleted by too many anglers. Some, however, mocking old bromides and rituals (especially sexual ones), manage to squeeze fresh laughs out of old fallacies, old prejudices that can still use a swift kick in the behind to speed them along their all-too-foot-dragging way.

What helps the play enormously is the letter-perfect production. Joe Mantello, a passable actor, is rapidly developing into an unsurpassable director of a type of (usually homosexual) comedy, to which he brings steady sophistication, resourcefulness, and effervescence. I suspect that a good quarter of *Mineola* is Mantello. But there are also bubbly contributions from the sets of Robert Brill and Scott Pask, the costumes of Jess Goldstein, the lighting of Kevin Adams, and the sound of David Van Tieghem.

And then there's the acting. As the twins, Swoosie Kurtz lets her exemplary facial play, timing, inflection, and body language perform double miracles in antipodal roles, and makes clear her mastery of every term in the comedian's lexicon. She is expertly supported, especially in a hilarious male part, by Mo Gaffney, whom I have always viewed as Kathy Najimy's better half, and who, on her own, is two whole lots of fun. And playing a pair of opposed sisters' totally reversed sons, Mandy Siegfried proves herself a young comedienne who'll duly knock them dead from Mineola to Minnesota. *The Mineola Twins* may be satire listing toward sitcom, but for once I understood why people around me were laughing.



Opposites distract: Swoosie Kurtz plays baby-boomer sisters in *The Mineola Twins*.

Photograph by Joan Marcus.

MARTIN CRIMP'S VERSION OF **The Misanthrope** IS MILDLY clever and mighty unappetizing. Originally done in London in 1996 and now updated and refurbished for Off Broadway, the adaption turns Molière's comedy of manners into a modern comedy of unmanneredness. The flirt Célimène becomes the Hollywood star Jennifer, now living in London with the British playwright Alceste (name unchanged, presumably because it rhymes easily) to perfect her acting in the English theater. The Molière characters become the critic Covington (Oronte), the journalist Ellen (Éliante), the acting coach Marcia (Arsinoé), and so on. The play becomes a travesty.

Molière's was an elegant, subtle social satire in exquisitely modulated Alexandrines (see Richard Wilbur's masterly translation); Crimp's is a broad topical farce, with smirking references to Lloyd Webber, deconstruction, Wittgenstein, Bill Clinton, L.A., etc., as in "Professionally you were accused of muscling in / on actors' work (like Lee Strasberg did to Marilyn)"—note the shambling metrics, shabby mentality, and shoddy syntax. Similarly when Alceste inveighs against

(continued on page 101)

'ACHIEVES SOMETHING RARE AND SPLENDID. I WILL ALWAYS BE HAUNTED BY THE IMAGE OF BRIAN DENNEHY AS WILLY LOMAN.

He seems to kidnap you by force, trapping you inside Willy's psyche. The sublime ELIZABETH FRANZ's astonishing portrayal creates a searing image of a woman fighting for her life. I could hear people not just sniffling but sobbing."
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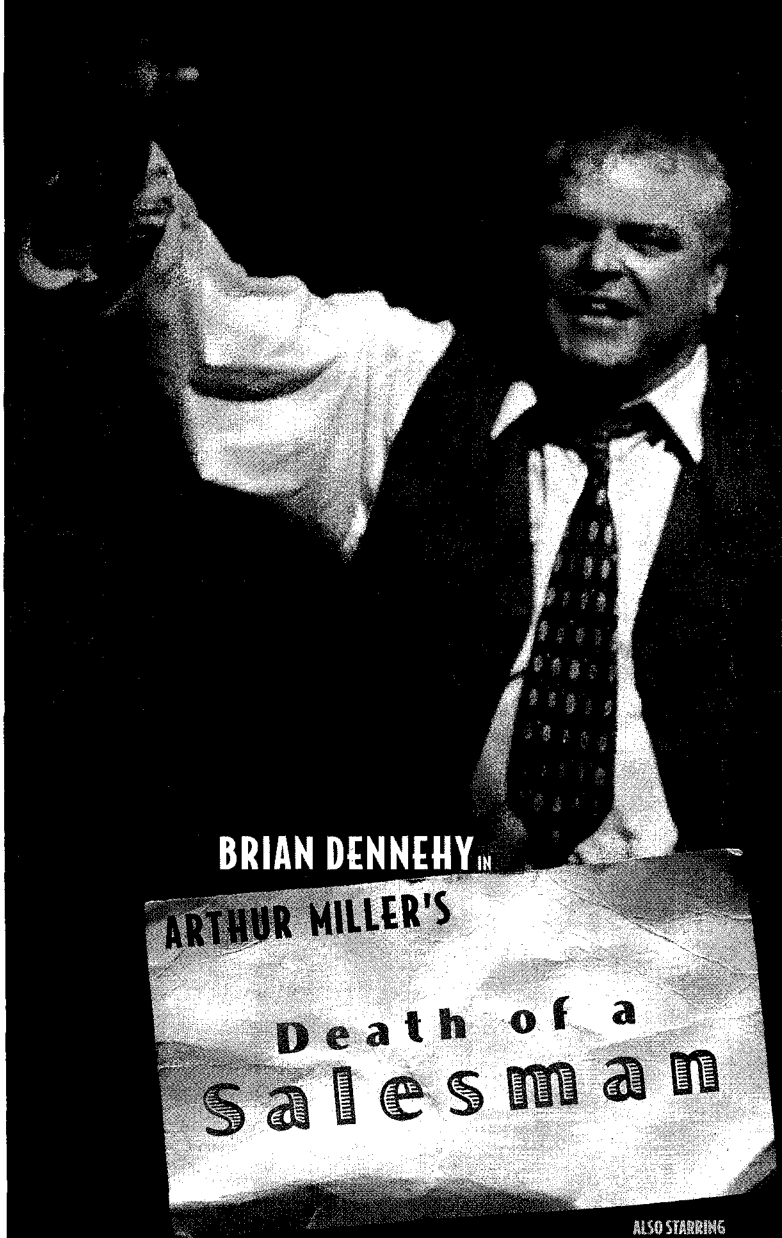
"THE PLAY IS TOWERING, THE PRODUCTION POWERFUL. Dennehy is wrenchingly heartbreaking; Franz and Anderson are superb."–Jack Kroll, Newsweek



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CLASSICAL MUSIC PETER G. DAVIS

Let Thy People Go

Mounting 'Moses und Aron' at the Met was a long-cherished dream of James Levine's. So why did he hire Philistines when he finally got the chance?

Just bag it: A scene from the new Met production of Arnold Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron*.

IT'S LONG BEEN SAID AROUND THE METROPOLITAN Opera that whatever Jimmy wants, Jimmy gets. And why not, considering that James Levine has put in more than 25 years of hard labor at the Met and the company owes him much? Part of that debt is now being paid off in the form of the Met's first-ever production of Arnold Schoenberg's **Moses und Aron**, an opera Levine has been yearning to conduct in New York for years. I doubt that there was ever much enthusiasm around the house for a project with so little hope of causing a crush at the box office. Schoenberg may have helped shape the destiny of twentieth-century music, and *Moses und Aron* may be a towering masterpiece, but the general opera-going public has never warmed to either the composer or his most important stage work and probably never will.

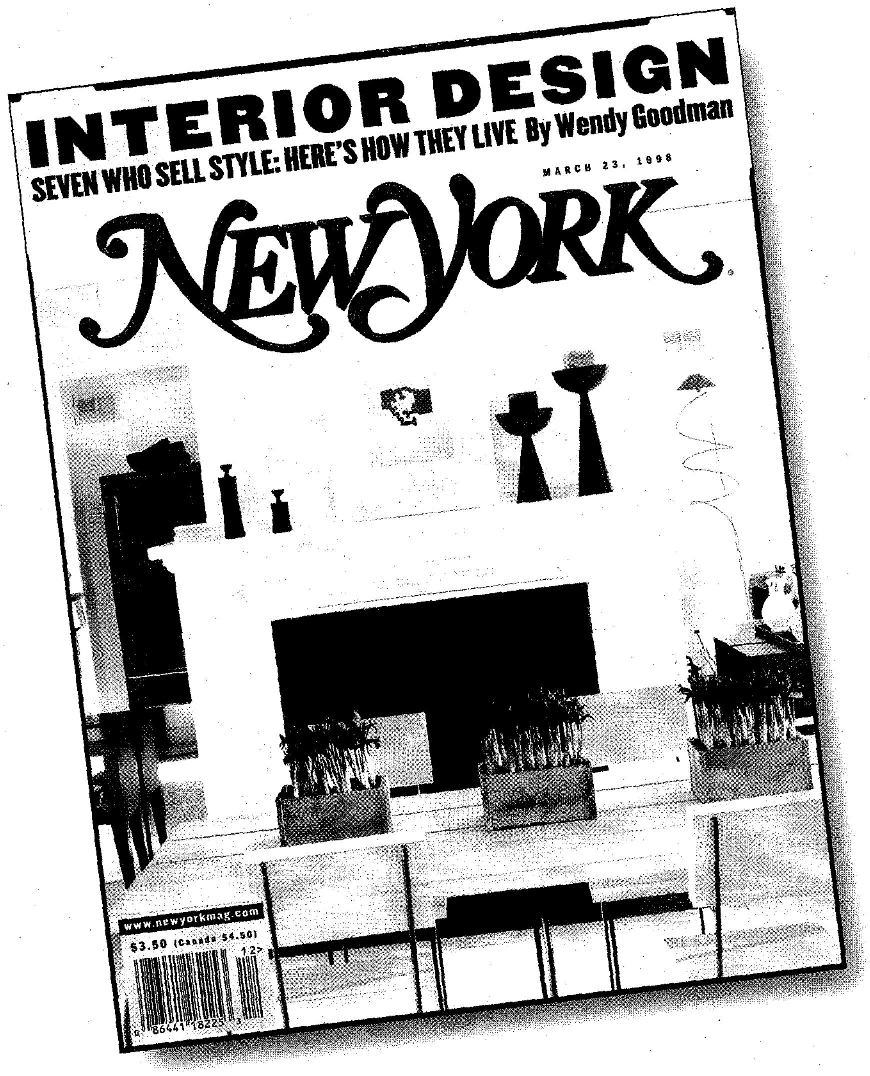
Well, too bad for the general opera-going public, and bravo for Levine—*Moses und Aron* belongs in the repertory of any major company with the means to deal adequately with its fearsome musical and scenic requirements, and today's Met most certainly has the wherewithal to do the piece full justice. Actually, the main stumbling block for an audience is not so much grappling with Schoenberg's score—the tolerance level for twelve-tone music has risen markedly since the opera was written in 1930–32—but how to interpret the implications of the composer's text. The conflict between Moses and Aron as presented here—how to translate the abstract idea of God into terms of human intelligibility—functions on several levels: as a theological concept, as a metaphor for art, as a political statement, even as Schoenberg's own personal dilemma at a crucial moment in his life when he reconverted to the Jewish faith. The two protagonists vividly personify this moral-aesthetic-political struggle, both dramatically and musically. *Moses und Aron* is indeed a real opera and not, as many still seem to think, an oratorio or a dry theoretical tract.

That said, I'm sorry to report that the Met production turns out to be a grievous disappointment, one that fails to serve the opera in just about every way imaginable. Exactly what the production team of Graham Vick (direction) and Paul Brown (set and costume design) had in mind is hard to say—the whole sorry business has a let's-throw-it-onstage-and-see-if-it-works look, a clutter of ill-assorted and poorly digested ideas without consistency or even much relevance to the piece. The cast is more or less in contemporary dress, with Moses as a barrel-chested businessman (with bare feet) and Aron looking rather like his chauffeur. The Israelites are first seen miming everyday activities—chatting, working out, typing, online stock trading, etc.—until the golden calf arrives and all hell breaks loose. Women in fur coats read fan magazines, disco-dancing punks rough up their girls, old men don plastic bags and suffocate (but later return to life and walk offstage), beggars carry tattered umbrellas, naked virgins (still in their undies—the Met is a family house, after all) strangle themselves on a red clothesline, and paparazzi seize photo ops everywhere.

But wait, there's more. Moses comes down from the mountain on a gigantic airline runway; the cartoonish sets are supplied with pop-up pyramids; explanatory English titles à la Brecht are scrawled on the scenery for the totally clueless; the six solo voices representing the burning bush sit onstage in formal evening dress holding scores and mouthing their music (Schoenberg wanted a disembodied sound from the orchestra pit); Moses and Aron sometimes totter off balance on a moving sidewalk. I could go on, but why bother? *Moses und Aron* can be staged in many valid ways that effectively communicate the purity, clarity, and dramatic power of Schoenberg's vision—Peter Hall's raw biblical epic at Covent Garden in 1965 and *(continued on page 101)*

Photograph by Beatriz Schiller.

DEDICATED TO THE BELIEF THAT IT'S WHAT'S INSIDE THAT COUNTS.


INTERIOR DESIGN
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MARCH 23, 1998
NEW YORK
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DANCE TOBI TOBIAS

Never Say Die

The Martha Graham Dance Company rises again for a stirring run at the Joyce; Wally Cardona presents some fine dancing, but where's the choreography?

CONTINUALLY BELEAGUERED, CONTINUALLY RISING phoenixlike from its own ashes, the **Martha Graham Dance Company** performed for three weeks at the Joyce at a critical moment in its history. Radical changes have been occurring: Ron Protas, the controversial figure who masterminded the latter part of Graham's career, is now scheduled to relinquish the position of artistic director and shift to managing subsidiary areas of the Graham empire. Janet Eilber, a former Graham principal, has been selected to lead the company, and respected Graham stars of the past and present will be on hand to ensure authentic renderings of Graham's choreography. The historic house and garden that sheltered Graham's studios and school have been sold and will be razed, alas, to retire monumental debts. But the floorboards, trodden by the feet of genius, have been salvaged and will be reinstalled when the school is relocated in the big, lucrative building to be erected on the site. A legend in herself and a creator of legends, the indomitable Martha would have relished that acknowledgment of the magical power latent in "ancestral footsteps."

The repertoire chosen for the Joyce engagement was blessedly free from the trash and self-parody often evident in Graham's later efforts. This sloughing-off of the less-than-worthy added to the luster of the masterpieces. There was an unusual emphasis on the earliest dances: the brief, telling, and incredibly varied solos Graham made for herself ("so I would have something to dance") and the group pieces with their all-female casts and their emphasis on striking stage patterns and vigorous use of flat, angular shapes. Emphatic in their starkness, *Heretic, Panorama, Deep Song,* and the ecstatic *Primitive Mysteries*—all created before Graham began thinking of the body as a spiral rather than a plane and turned to sex, psychology, and Greek mythology—look vibrant and suddenly brand-new.

Katherine Crockett in Martha Graham's *Appalachian Spring.*

Photograph by Beatriz Schiller.

Graham's subsequent "American cycle" was luminously represented by *Appalachian Spring,* a moving but unsentimental paean to the pioneer spirit and, incidentally, one of the most exquisitely constructed dances ever made. There were several entries from the later "Greek cycle," ranging from the easily accessible *Errand Into the Maze* (which depicts, through mythic metaphor, the triumph over fear) to the "difficult" *Herodiade* (about the struggle to commit oneself to a goal likely to require self-martyrdom). Throughout the scrupulously selected repertoire, the dancing ranged from good to marvelous—and this is something of a miracle (of talent, will, and coaching), given the fact that the company lacks performers to equal the unforgettable stars of its past.

Two veterans, Christine Dakin and Terese Capucilli, revealed, in a formidable range of roles, nuances of thought and feeling above and beyond their familiar accomplishments. Younger in experience, Miki Orihara displayed both the tempered-steel technique and the sensitivity of her seniors, while the relative newcomer Fang-Yi Sheu was as exquisite as a translucent porcelain vase in the poignant role of the outsider in *Heretic.* Among the male contingent—always weaker in the Graham company, perhaps because the heroes of the dances are all female—Martin Lofsnes did yeoman's duty throughout, while Tadej Brdnik, though cast physically against type, was deeply touching as the Husbandman in *Appalachian Spring.* The all-important ensemble worked with vigor disciplined by an evident desire to do right, and the spectacle of superb dances performed with the right intentions frequently had the audience cheering.

Two novelties were offered. *But Not for Me "Gershwin/Graham,"* by the Broadway choreographer Susan Stroman, is a deft, charming Broadway-style diversion, evoking—through the metaphor of a pajama party—a bunch of urbanites yearning for love. What it is doing next to *Night Journey,* Graham's searing take on Oedipus and Jocasta (bed sculpted by Isamu Noguchi), is beyond my understanding. *Duets for Martha,* a pointless assemblage of short takes by Robert Wilson, Lucinda Childs (hers was new), Maurice Béjart, and Twyla Tharp, must be thought of as a pièce d'occasion and, the occasion passed, charitably be forgotten. The Graham company has survived far worse and will, one hopes, enjoy far better.

I WAS LURED TO DANCE THEATER WORKSHOP for the **Wally Cardona Quartet**'s recent concert because I admired the dancing of two members of the foursome, Kimberly Bartosik and Alan Good, when they performed with Merce Cunningham. The promised guest artists—young Benjamin Millepied of the New York City Ballet, the Graham company's Christine Dakin, and the veteran Risa Steinberg, formerly a star with Limón—were further insurance; I assumed performers of that caliber were unlikely to cast their lot with mediocrity.

Well, the dancing was just fine. The Cunningham alums have retained their ability to imprint shape after incisive shape on your retina. Cardona himself is a lustier, less refined but more fluid dancer, with a marvelous face that calls to mind the criminal-poet François Villon. Kathryn Sanders, the least seasoned of the regulars, looks promising; she just needs to open up more—in her torso and face. Steinberg, the guest assigned to the performance I saw, was predictably serene, radiant, and strong, with a concentration that suggests she exists, when dancing, on a psychic plane more exalted than ordinary folks'.

But then there was the choreography. Or, rather, then there wasn't. In general, Cardona creates lots of activity for the arms and legs, which sweep through the space or churn it with taut, spasmodic gestures. The other areas of the body have little to say. There's not much else to engage the attention—in terms of musicality (or even rhythm), variety of dynamics, or structure in time or space. The work being of the postmodern persuasion, no clear ideas, messages, narrative, or characters are in evidence. In one piece, *Four Ramonas,* the movement settled periodically into poses that evoked the plastique cultivated early in this century. The new work, *Open House 01,* part of a projected trilogy, is meaner and more millennial, fixating on all-too-familiar images of impending doom. The only wholly satisfactory aspect of the program was Jill Anderson's *Four Ramonas* costume design: spare, imaginative, and elegant.

Tobi Tobias's 1997–99 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

Simon *continued from page 96*

"pleasing the voters Washington-style / by presenting a more balanced ratio / of serious politics and witty off-the-cuff fellatio."

This is Crimp reaching for the heights. More often he is content with tossing in a four-letter word for wit, as in "He thinks of himself as the Delphic fucking oracle," rhyming, all too aptly, with *abominable.* Again: "I mean could you really bear / to sit through another play by Ayckbourn or David fucking Hare," updated from "by Stoppard" in '96. And again: "These two charming creatures / are worse than the Society of fucking Jesus." This should give you a fair idea of Crimp's versification as well as of his worsification of Molière.

Moreover, Crimp wants to have it both ways. Beyond mere persiflage, he also wants authenticity, with any number of facile seventeenth-century references and even turning the last part of the play into a fancy-dress party in Louis Quatorze costumes. With one foot in each period, he is able to put his foot in it twice.

The able Barry Edelstein makes his debut as artistic director of the Classic Stage Company with this unfortunate choice. Still, he has obtained a snazzy production from his various designers, and he knows how to move actors smoothly around. But the choice of the trendy Michael Torke to provide his customary cacophonous music was poor, and so are several of the actors. The trusty Roger Rees does much to make Alceste bearable with precise diction, polished movements, and general savoir faire. But he lets us have breakneck accelerandos and ear-splitting fortissimos rather too cavalierly, and now and then lapses into undue cuteness. Mary Lou Rosato is nearly as good as the Paula Strasbergish Marcia, and Nick Wyman does manfully by the loathsome critic. I find Crimp's critic-baiting the sincerest form of flattery.

It was probably a coup to secure Uma Thurman for Jennifer, and though she looks almost as good as Nicole Kidman, she bares even less, except for a certain lack of talent. With her tall, sinuous figure, she slinks and tosses herself about capitally, but what comes from her mouth is rote stuff. The insufferable Michael Emerson, who made a mockery of Oscar Wilde in the wretched *Gross Indecency,* is no less smarmily gelatinous as John (Philinte), but rock bottom is achieved by Adina Porter, whose vocal and physical posturing, meant to be blasé, is merely blatant.

This kind of adaptation is wonderfully easy. In the next updating we could get: "Miss Thurman made her move back, marked *attacca* / to Hollywood, *Pulp Fiction,* and *Gattaca* / And we, in turn, moved past the bloated shrimp / who'd be Molière, dear Martin fucking Crimp."

John Simon's 1997–99 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

Davis *continued from page 98*

Achim Freyer's stark, sun-baked minimalist imagery at the City Opera in 1990 are just two memories that I treasure. But Vick and Brown refuse to take the piece seriously, haphazardly heaping the stage with piles of brainless junk that positively insult the intelligence.

More surprising, the musical side of the evening is little better. Schoenberg intended the role of Moses to be spoken on pitch, a rigorous song-speech of rocklike majesty to contrast with Aron's sinuous, smoothly articulate vocal lines. John Tomlinson ruins the whole effect by vainly attempting to sing the notes, unnaturally puffing up his voice in the process and making himself sound like an over-the-hill bass. In music that should ideally be sung with the spinning lyrical tone of a young Fritz Wunderlich, Philip Langridge's aging tenor sounds thick, unappealing, and recalcitrant. Perhaps both singers are hampered by the inane production, but neither one manages to project the slightest sense of personality or conflict.

Considering Levine's commitment to the opera, his contribution to this sad affair is most puzzling of all. As has been pointed out time and again, the Met orchestra under his care has been fashioned into a crack instrument, one that should be able to give a dazzling account of this subtle and exquisitely fashioned score. And yet the orchestral playing everywhere lacks color, definition, expressive shape, and emotional intensity, essential musical qualities that might at least help neutralize what we see onstage. Unfortunately, all the great moments pass for virtually nothing: the seductive blend of flute, harp, and solo strings that introduces Aron's first lyrical solo; the sheer instrumental brilliance of the golden-calf orgy; the laserlike unison-violin phrases that end the opera so movingly, a sound that should pierce Moses's very being as his spirit crumbles. Instead, the entire opera comes off sounding overcautious, rigid, and drab, criticisms that can also be applied to the Met chorus, which fails to sing this ferociously challenging music with the confidence and accuracy one hopes or expects to hear.

Perhaps Levine's missionary spirit for *Moses und Aron* was crushed at some point during the rehearsal period by what he saw developing onstage—this conductor is never at his best when he senses a lost cause unfolding before his eyes. In any case, the Met, which has championed and successfully produced so many hard-sell but artistically important operas in recent years, has trashed a masterpiece.

Peter G. Davis's 1997–99 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

TELEVISION JOHN LEONARD

Smaller Than Life

Richard Dreyfuss tries to pump up Meyer Lansky with a no-regrets pugnacity, but pugnacious David Mamet shrinks the Jewish mobster down to TV-screen size.

WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS, WHAT HAPPENED to Spinoza? Through both hours of David Mamet's lean, mean **Lansky** (Saturday, February 27; 8 to 10 P.M.; HBO), I waited in vain for a mention of the author of *Ethica*. This was because I distinctly remember, sometime in the late seventies, hearing on the radio about an interview in the Miami *Herald* in which Meyer Lansky, during one of several incarcerations for income-tax evasion, after he had been refused asylum in Israel or even in Paraguay, wanted the world to know that he was reading Spinoza. I have been vexed ever since with a vivid image of the bookkeeper of organized crime meeting the philosopher of moral autonomy; of the maker of license plates at a sitdown with the grinder of lenses. It's a reference omitted from both Sergio Leone's spaghetti Eastern about Jewish gangsters, *Once Upon a Time in America* (1984), and Francis Ford Coppola's grandly operatic *The Godfather, Part II* (1974), in which Lee Strasberg himself played the Lansky-like Hyman Roth. But surely David Mamet would be as tantalized as I was by this tidbit.

Apparently not. *Lansky* is Mamet being Pinteresque—knowing and inarticulate, anxious and unspecified, impudent and evasive, laconic but also callous, cryptic but also spinal-tapped, barbed between ellipses. As in Pinter, there is nobody here to like. "You do what you have to do at the time," says Meyer (Richard Dreyfuss), at the end of his 70 years. And, walking his dog into the sunset: "Who you are is who you are." This is a lot less than Spinoza had to say about free will. On the other hand, screenwriter Mamet at least resists the temptation to wiseguy. After so many Cosa Nostrums out of Hollywood tending to suggest that however violent, mobsters are also cute—picking up tips from previous films on how to patter and swag; doing the Tarantino—it's a relief to hear them in their brute banality.

Anyway, if Dreyfuss as Lansky can't communicate subtleties of feeling or a rich interior life to either of his wives (Illeana Douglas, Beverly D'Angelo), how likely is he to confide such filigree to John McNaughton's fidgety camera? What this autumnal patriarch does best is refuse to second-guess himself. Flashing back to the pogroms of his Polish childhood, the crap games of a delinquent youth on the Lower East Side, the syndicating of oddsmaker Meyer and buddies like Bugsy Siegel (Eric Roberts) and Lucky Luciano (Anthony LaPaglia), the birth of a crippled son, the high-rolling Havana days, the embarrassment of the Kefauver hearings, the flight to Israel (where the Law of Return uniquely failed to apply), the ignominious extradition from uppity Panama, he is not only entirely unrepentant but sees no point at all in bothering to imagine having done anything different, because, of course, he's already done what he did.

Which isn't to say he's equable. Much of the flashing back is from Jerusalem, where he visits the Mount of Olives cemetery and the Western Wall while waiting for court and Knesset to decide his fate. If he won't rage, he at least snarls, blaming Richard Nixon and Attorney General John Mitchell for withholding American jets unless Israel sends him packing. As, later, he will complain to an Israeli reporter in a Miami coffee shop that J. Edgar Hoover is out to get him after so many years of pretending that crime wasn't organized at all, because the G-man needs some "non-Italian" fall guy. "The Cossacks are coming!" says Dreyfuss/Lansky. It is a measure of the Dreyfuss/Mamet reticence that we don't know if even *he* believes this, any more than we are sure he's capable of genuine regret at having acquiesced in the murder of poor Bugsy, who got in over his head in Las Vegas.

It must be said that Bugsy has more fun than anyone else in this movie. Eric Roberts's proclivity to excess is actually encouraged. LaPaglia's Luciano will enjoy himself intermittently, say, when he's softening up Sicily for an allied invasion while on sabbatical from the federal pen. But Meyer . . . well, a cunning Dreyfuss restrains his own tendency toward overmuch; an audit is an audit, even of your own turpitudes. After all, Meyer rationalizes, he

(continued on page 104)

Kosher Nostra: Dreyfuss as Mamet's elusive Lansky in HBO's reserved biopic.

Photograph by Ron Batzdorff/HBO.

HAL RUBENSTEIN

Truth to Tell...

It's the attention to detail—in its curry nage, in its wine list, in its air-conditioning duct—that makes Scott Bryan's Veritas such an instant success.

Refuge-niks: The dining room at Veritas is spare but cozy, with touches of color, comfort, and romance.

I KNOW THIS SOUNDS AS IF IT'S damning with faint praise, but **Veritas** has the craftiest air-conditioning ductwork you've ever seen: a perforated cloth cylinder, spanning the room in silence, suspended just below the ceiling and off the long brick wall. And when it's not in use, the tube deflates to hang flat as a banner, a pale, elevated, mini-version of Christo's *Running Fence.*

Now, before chef Scott Bryan or any of his partners or staff begins reaching for the Fernet Branca, it's important to note that this is not Veritas's premier attraction. But transforming an unwieldy necessity like a ventilating system into a surprising and inventive design element spotlights the enthusiasm for sly, understated detail that permeates every aspect of this unexpectedly elegant and mature new restaurant.

It's doubtful you would break stride to notice Veritas, certainly not with the picture-windowful of activity going on across the street at Gramercy Tavern. Nor does its narrow bar or square dining room contain any dynamic feature to match the Tavern's vivid bar-corralling mural. And yet Veritas's individual components—clear, conical bar lamps, muted celadon walls, sleek saddle-leather chairs, diorama niches displaying jewel-tone glass vases set in an oyster-white wall—combine to create a room that, though spare and deliberately devoid of distractions, feels easy to take refuge in. There is just enough color, just enough comfort, a touch of formality (this place is obviously meant for grown-ups), even a hint of romance in its mellowness.

A full-blown, hot-but-not-heavy love affair is going on just out of view, however, right there in the kitchen—it's between Bryan and chef de cuisine Christina Kelly and their menu. (Actually, there is another grand passion afoot as well. One look at the stunningly ecumenical, deliciously idiosyncratic, yet sky's-the-limit wine list, and you know you're surrounded by intense oenophilia. A word to the wise: Let the sommelier choose. He can entwine grape to meal better than any pairing Gene Rayburn ever commended on *The Match Game*).

Considering how other fast-blooming chefs are proclaiming their bistrophilic biases, pan-Asian passions, and South American ardor, brandishing favored spices as if they were aphrodisiacs, Bryan and Kelly's liaison is an atypically quiet thing. The menu's listings are shockingly modest, refusing to reveal each quarter-teaspoon of seasoning or detail every cooking procedure more deft than a toss. Such restraint is both rare and welcome. So is Bryan's enviable and equally uncommon (for the times) urge to turn toward a lighter method of preparing regional American cuisine.

At Bryan's first venture, the now-refashioned Luma, flavors were dense and lush. At his second, Indigo, dishes are constructed of short bursts of bright flavors (and the service, unfortunately, is too often composed of short bursts of grudging attention). At his third, Siena (on the former site of Luma), he harnesses the boisterous big flavors of Italy. But with Veritas, Bryan and Kelly are looking for their union to yield delicacy and refinement, even airiness. It's a risky blend that few attempt because it so often turns precious, leaving diners licking their lips in anticipation until they feel silly and, worse, starving.

Happily, Bryan's gamble has been fruitful, and joyous occasions often multiply with each mouthful. An ethereal bowl of warm truffled oysters exemplifies the level of achievement: a splash of Riesling in a whipped foam of cream and leeks, a sprinkling of fines herbes, finger-

Photograph by Kenneth Chen.

ling potatoes, plus fat and happy oysters floating to the surface. No chili rub wailing for attention, no blast of cumin demanding its due. The dish flows like the third glass of champagne, more sensual than the rustle of velvet dropping to the floor. Sweetbreads are enriched by chestnut purée but resist their potential pasty aftertaste thanks to a lacing of lemon. Frothy lentil soup looks like a great bowl of cappuccino, delicious as it is weightless, except for rich flecks of thick-cut bacon that barely rest on the tongue for more than two beats.

Wild-mushroom ravioli is another dish worthy of full embrace. The pasta almost ripples in the emulsion, while the porcini and shiitake share, rather than fight for, your attention. A slightly briny tuna tartare is tackled by the sweetness of green onions and mint into happy submission. The foie gras is the only appetizer that could have benefited from some tough love. Tenderly seared and delicious on its own, it should have been accompanied by the pineapple compote or the ginger-pink-peppercorn vinaigrette (the latter is the better consort, though).

The pepper-crusted venison, however, surrounded by a spry cherry-Armagnac jus, is a wonderful ménage. In fact, if a house is going to have only seven entrées, why not make them all equally good? Bryan and Kelly have done just that: A densely sweet, farm-raised chicken in Madeira and a moat of garlic-rich potato purée. Shrimp-and-wild-mushroom risotto with a velvety carpet of black truffles (bound to cause resentment when others realize you're giving all your attention to your plate). A completely satisfying roast squab that's flanked by crunchy green lentils and baby beets but whose charms are unlocked by an innocuous-looking brown sauce that is actually an emulsified elixir of foie gras. And the real star—shellfish broth bathing moist layers of codfish, studded by eggplant caviar and dusted with saffron. But the fish most altered is salmon in a sublimely buoyant foam of curry nage. I would be delighted to pour the latter on anything. Anything.

There is an inflexible bias in my family that when it comes to dessert, there is chocolate, and then there is everything else. (Daniel Boulud's new restaurant splits his dessert list precisely this way. I have to check: We must be related.) However, neither that nor the smooth brioche bread pudding with mascarpone nor the richly appealing apple tart can match a praline parfait so enticingly perfumed by a reduction of clementine oranges as to qualify as the Dom Pérignon of Creamsicles. I sincerely hope Mr. Bryan takes that as a compliment. I would hate to have him think that I come to Veritas only to enjoy the splendor of his climate-control apparatus.

I RECENTLY RECEIVED A PHONE CALL FROM a furious diner. She said she had called Babbo restaurant to make a reservation for eight people, and the house had refused, citing the intimacy of its two dining rooms, each of which handles around 50 people. *What arrogance,* she declared. *What restaurant would want to restrict the number of* her *guests?* A smart one.

Last month I dined at **Siena**, one of the other outposts of Veritas chef Scott Bryan and his partner Gino Diaferia. Siena serves zesty and warming contemporary Italian cuisine. It's a vivacious neighborhood place, in vibrant contrast to the matte finish of Veritas, and its easygoing manner is infectious. So we relished the hot-pepper broth of the linguine vongole with loads of shredded bread, tore at the almost-pulled nature of the Barolo-braised pork, squinched our noses at the bristle of dandelions in white-truffle essence, and lunged for the coziness in a spoonful of ribollita. Just like everyone was doing. In their own space.

But Siena seats only 65. The last time we were there, so was a table of twelve. Face it, a group's decibel level is directly proportionate to how big it is. And so they bellowed across the table. They played musical chairs as if they were at sleepaway camp. They laughed too loud, they screamed too often, they passed, they dropped, they leaned back and got in everyone's way. They took pictures. In other words, they behaved exactly as you would if you had been sitting at a table with eleven of *your* friends.

We tried to enjoy our rib eye and rosemary chicken. Chef de cuisine Kristin Maugeri had certainly done her part. And the staff were all worthy of the purple heart. But except for the dirty dozen, every table was having about as much fun as if they'd all been served cysts.

Sorry, ma'am. The management of Babbo is right. If you are going to dine with a large party, choose a restaurant that can handle your crowd. And for those who insist "Oh, no, not *my* friends," the next time someone in your circle has a house party for the gang, ask him how many footprints he 409'ed off the wall afterward. Bet not as many as the cigarette butts he found in the areca palm.

Veritas, 43 East 20th Street (353-3700). Lunch, weekdays noon to 2:30; dinner, Monday through Saturday 6 to 11, Sunday 5 to 10. A.E., M.C., V. Appetizers $8–$16; entrées $22–$28.

Siena, 200 Ninth Avenue, near 23rd Street (633-8033). Dinner, Monday through Saturday 6 to 11, Sunday 5 to 10. A.E. Appetizers $6–$8, entrées $10–$18.

Hal Rubenstein's 1997–99 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

Leonard *continued from page 102*

never shot anybody, personally.

Mamet insinuates that organized crime—like organized religion, organized labor, the army, or the boxing ring—is just another launching pad for upwardly mobile immigrants. Accordingly, we can think of Bugsy's Social Darwinism as primitive accumulation leading to the laissez-faire stage of capitalism, which then evolves into the higher monopolistic forms of Luciano's corporate-syndicalist vision, which then requires Lansky's sort of managerial revolution. As well as money, what's laundered are class and social origins.

But maybe, in wanting some Spinoza to spice my Lansky, I'm as meretricious as Hollywood. Are Jewish gangsters supposed to be more interesting or intellectual than Italians, just because Warren Beatty and Harvey Keitel played Bugsy before Eric Roberts, and E. L. Doctorow and William S. Burroughs wrote novels about Dutch Schultz, and Scott Fitzgerald's *Great Gatsby* seems as crucial to our mythic imagination as Horatio Alger's Ragged Dick? Gangsters show up, too, in the novels of Saul Bellow and William Kennedy. It's as if, in an American literature of loners and losers, of deer-slayers, Lone Rangers, private eyes, and Huck Finns, we must always code our romance with money in fables of the urban outlaw, or end up as dead salesmen.

ROSIE, WHO BESTOWS THE FIRST KISS AND the ultimate favor upon a young and callow Laurie Lee, after which he becomes a poet, won't show up till the very end of **Cider With Rosie** (Sunday, February 28; 9 to 10:30 P.M.; Channel 13), an especially charming installment of "Mobil Masterpiece Theatre" adapted by John Mortimer from one of Lee's several lyrical memoirs. Part of this charm is rural, a semi-feudal Slad Valley in the English Cotswolds that the camera loves as much as if it were Eden, Arden, or Arcadia. Part of the charm is Lee himself, who recorded the narration before his death in 1997. But most of it's Juliet Stevenson, who plays Lee's mother, Annie, left by a bounder to raise eight children with no money.

If you've seen Stevenson in *Truly Madly Deeply* or *The Politician's Wife*, you'll not need me to tell you she's terrific, with a stray curl, a mad gleam, and more energy than the Industrial Revolution. With such a mother, Laurie (Joe Roberts) hardly needs a Rosie (Lia Barrow) or a violin, an army deserter, a tattooed uncle, or spinsters in the attic, nor even the promiscuous Miss Flynn (Emily Mortimer), who is as lovely, sad, and swanlike as these remembrances. With such a mother, D. H. Lawrence might have been a nicer person.

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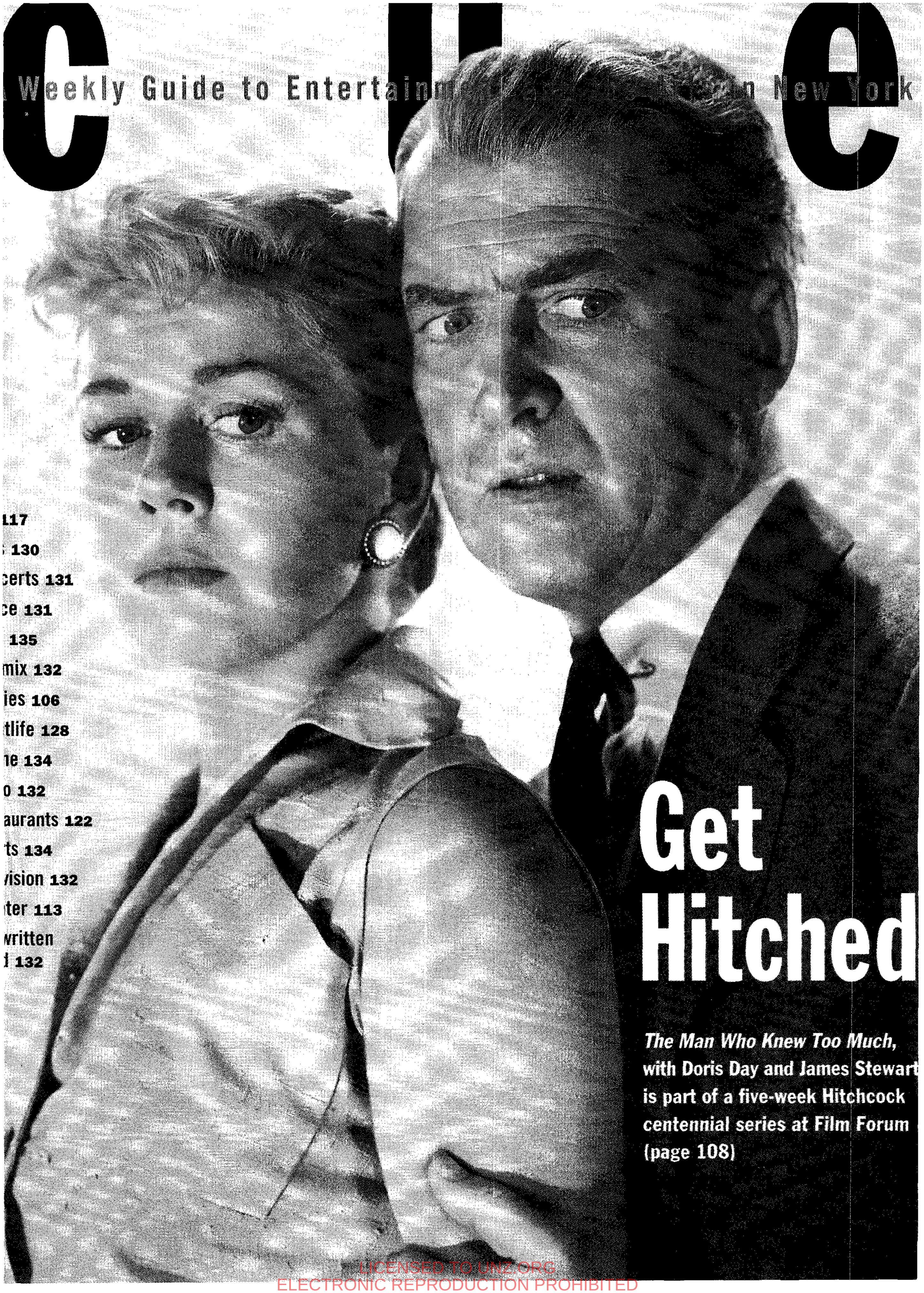
A Weekly Guide to Entertainm n New York



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Get Hitched

The Man Who Knew Too Much, with Doris Day and James Stewart is part of a five-week Hitchcock centennial series at Film Forum (page 108)

movies

200 Cigarettes . . . 8 mm . . . "Celebration of Marseilles"

Opening
Love Lessons

She's rich; he's poor. She's educated; he's not. She's of a certain age; he's almost a boy. Yes, Isabelle Huppert and Vincent Martinez (above) are star-crossed lovers in The School of Flesh, Benoit Jacquot's (A Single Girl) take on the destructive romance of a successful fashion designer and the handsome young hustler she spies behind the bar. The film—based on a novel by Yukio Mishima—opens Friday, February 26.

New Films

★**Affliction**—Writer-director Paul Schrader's adaptation of the 1989 Russell Banks novel is a heavy dose of oppressiveness. Small-town New Hampshire looks like hell frozen over. It's a cast meat-locker of a locale, except the dead meat is walking around instead of hung up on hooks. Barreling his way through this frostbitten inferno, Wade Whitehouse (Nick Nolte) is the archetypal walking wounded. He may try to wriggle out of his fate, but it's bigger than he is. He's a good man gnarled by primal circumstance. The world of this movie is framed as a battlefield of male privilege, and even if you reject the hallucinatory machismo at its core, it holds you. There's excellent supporting work by Sissy Spacek, Willem Dafoe, Mary Beth Hurt, and James Coburn. Nolte is near the top of his form. The character he plays is afflicted all right—beyond reckoning. The movie is his dirge. (Rainer; 1/11/99) (1 hr. 54 mins.; R) *CC Angelika Film Center; Clearview's Chelsea; Cineplex Odeon Coronet; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; Cinemart; UA Hylan Plaza.*

Another Day in Paradise—James Woods plays a journeyman criminal in the Midwest looking for one last big score. He acts like he's barefoot on a griddle. As his moll mate, Melanie Griffith is a cooled-out contrast with her snuggly ambiguousness and babykins voice. It's one of her best performances. Director Larry Clark mixes higher realism with plush pop-psych cliches about the need for these people to connect. The final effect is oddly disjointed: We appear to be watching an avant-garde antique. (Rainer; 2/1/99) (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) *CC Village East.*

The Apple—The shocking semi-true story of two young Tehranian girls imprisoned by their parents. Directed by 18-year-old Samira Makhmalbaf. (1 hr. 25 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; BAM Rose Cinemas.*

B. Monkey—A professor falls for his beautiful but criminally inclined student and finds he's in over his head. With Asia Argento, Jared Harris, Rupert Everett, and Jonathan Rhys Meyers. Directed by Michael Radford. (1 hr. 31 mins.; R) *Opens 2/26.*

★**Babe: Pig in the City**—This is every bit as funny as its predecessor, but it's funny in a screwier, twistier way. By bringing the pig into the urban hell of strays and pet impounders, director George Miller—with his co-writers, Judy Morris and Mark Lamprell, and his animal trainers and animatronic experts—opens up a brave new world. In *Babe*, he was a leader of sheep. Now he's a leader of men—and ducks, chimps, poodles, even pit bulls. His innocence proves cast-iron. Babe brings together dogs and cats, pink poodles and pit bulls. Kids barred from this movie by wary parents are missing out on a helluva role model. (Rainer; 12/14/98) (1 hr. 35 mins.; PG) *Centre Sunnyside.*

Beshkempir—The Adopted Son—A boy in a rural Asian village finds out that—like many in his region—he was born into a large family that then offered him to a childless couple. Written and directed by Aktan Abdykalykov. In Kyrgyzstani with English subtitles. (1 hr. 21 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

Blast From the Past—A man comes out of a bomb shelter after thirty years alone. Starring Brendan Fraser, Alicia Silverstone, Sissy Spacek, and Christopher Walken. Directed by Hugh Wilson. (About 1 hr. 45 mins.; R) *Clearview's Chelsea; Cineplex Odeon Coronet; UA Criterion Center; Loews Orpheum 7; New Coliseum; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion Theatre; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Blood, Guts, Bullets & Octane—Against their better judgment, two down-on-their-luck used-car salesmen agree to take care of a red convertible for two days for $250,000. Written by Joe Carnahan. (1 hr. 27 mins.; NR) *Opens 2/26.*

★**A Bug's Life**—Disney's new computer-animated film is an iridescent marvel. It's also buggy with tie-ins, but that should not get in the way of our enjoyment of this wiseacre Aesop's fable. (Rainer; 12/7/98) (1 hr. 34 mins.; G) .

The Celebration—A family reunites for its patriarch's 60th-birthday party and certain horrible secrets spill out over dinner. Directed by Thomas Vinterberg. (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) *The Screening Room.*

★**Central Station**—I can't join in with the prevailing opinion that Walter Salles's *Central Station* is on par with early De Sica—I love early De Sica too much. But in this otherwise rather schematic swatch of social catharsis, Brazil's Fernanda Montenegro gives the best performance by an actress I've seen all year. De Sica might not have made this movie, but he would have recognized in her bitter, beseeching portrayal a kindred character. (Rainer; 12/14/98) (1 hr. 55 mins.; R) *Quad Cinema; CC Eastside Playhouse; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; BAM Rose Cinemas.*

Children of Heaven—A young boy loses his sister's only pair of shoes and tries to get them back without letting his parents know they are missing. Written and directed by Majid Majidi. (1 hr. 28 mins.; PG) *Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

A Civil Action—Jonathan Harr's nonfiction best-seller is being used as a textbook in law schools, but the movie that has been made from it is unlikely to be a model in film schools. Written and directed by

Ground Rules:

These brief reviews, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by Peter Rainer...A ★ denotes a current release that *New York* recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element...Reviews are followed by the theaters where the film is playing.

'Cue' cover photograph from Photofest.

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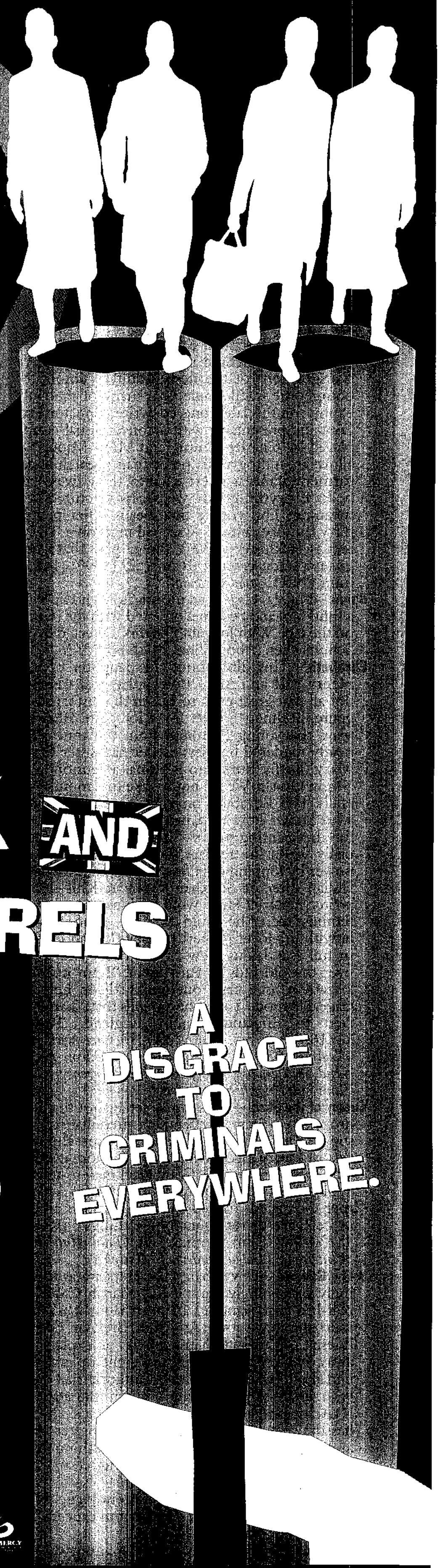

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Retrospective

The Master's Class

Film Forum's five-week "Universal Hitchcock" series is a refresher course on the master director: Thirteen of his 54 films (in various stages of restoration) have been reprinted in honor of his centennial, including *Psycho, Vertigo, The Birds,* and *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (above). Also on the lesson plan: vintage Hitchcock movie trailers and his final film, 1976's *Family Plot.* For film buffs, attendance is mandatory. Through March 18. See "Museums, Societies, Etc." for more info.

Steve Zaillian, it has more negative virtues than positive. It's commendable for not doing many of the things we expect from legal thrillers in this Grisham era, but we're left with a long trudge through the ambiguities of civic virtue. "The courtroom is not a place to look for truth." No kidding. (Rainer; 1/11/99) (2 hrs.; PG-13) *Loews Orpheum 7; Sony Lincoln Square; North Shore Towers.*

Down in the Delta—A Chicago grandmother moves her daughter and grandchildren back to Mississippi in hopes of pulling them away from the problems of the city. With Alfre Woodard, Al Freeman Jr., Esther Rolle, Mary Alice, Loretta Devine, Wesley Snipes, Mpho Koaho, and Kulani Hassen. Directed by Maya Angelou. (1 hr. 50 mins.; PG-13) *Linden Boulevard Multiplex.*

Dry Cleaning—For such a supposedly sophisticated race, the French sure make a big deal about the transgressions of the flesh. Adultery among the bourgeoisie is still Topic A in many of the Gallic exports. In this latest one, co-writer-director Anne Fontaine presents us with a conventional couple, played by Charles Berling and Miou-Miou, who allow an androgynous punk drag nightclub performer (Stanislas Merhar) into their lives—and beds. Everything that we see is tinctured with meaning: This couple that cleans other people's dirty laundry ends up swamped in its own. The effect is lackluster—like a Pinter play that's been given a snide-ectomy. (Rainer; 2/15/99) (1 hr. 37 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

8 mm—Nicolas Cage is an investigator who discovers a snuff film and becomes obsessed with the stranger on the tape. With Joaquin Phoenix. Directed by Joel Schumacher. (About 2 hrs.; R) *Opens 2/26.*

Elizabeth—This film, about the daughter of King Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, has real verve. It's not all that great even so, but in the historical-bio genre, liveliness counts for a lot. Cate Blanchett plays the young Elizabeth from the time she is nearly rendered headless by her half-sister Queen Mary (Kathy Burke) to her final ascension as the Virgin Queen. We are not to take that moniker literally. The Elizabeth on view here is a frolicker who knows how to dangle her spinsterhood before her panting suitors. She's a sexy queen, especially when she realizes she needs to ensure her power by lopping off a few heads of her own. The Indian director Shekhar Kapur and his screenwriter, Michael Hirst, would like us to see her as a feminist icon: She could do it all—dance the volta with her lover Robert Dudley (Joseph Fiennes) in full scandalous view of her court and lord it over the old fuds in Parliament. "I am no man's Elizabeth," she cries out while still in her marriageable mode. Later, she amends that: "I am married to England." Lucky England. (Rainer; 11/16/98) (2 hrs. 4 mins.; R) *Art Greenwich Twin; Clearview's Chelsea West; Cineplex Odeon First & 62nd St. Cinema; Cineplex Odeon Regency; Centre Sunnyside; North Shore Towers.*

Enemy of the State—This film is set against the backdrop of top-secret government surveillance, and I suppose it's all meant to be Kafkaesque. But since this is a Jerry Bruckheimer production, it's more like Kafka on steroids. Gene Hackman (ostensibly Will Smith's co-star) plays a kind of defrocked former CIA agent named Brill who knows all sorts of clever secret-agent-type things. (Rainer; 11/30/98) (2 hrs. 7 mins.; R) *Guild 50th Street; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex.*

★**The General**—Few movie characters are as rollickingly, disturbingly complex as Martin Cahill, the real-life Irish gangster in John Boorman's mesmerizing new movie. As Cahill, Brendan Gleeson doesn't try to soften him for us or explain him away. He keeps us perplexed right up until the end about this fanatically anti-authoritarian crook, who despised equally the Church, the state, the IRA, the police. It's a great performance. The film has the structure of an American gangster classic and yet it doesn't remind you of anything else—even other Boorman films. (Rainer; 1/4/99) (2 hrs. 5 mins.; NR) *CC Village East.*

God Said, "Ha!"—Julia Sweeney's monologue on living through her brother's death from cancer. (1 hr. 27 mins.; PG-13) *Film Forum.*

Gods and Monsters—The story of aging director James Whale (Ian McKellen) and his relationship with his lawn-boy, played by Brendan Fraser. With Lynn Redgrave. Written and directed by Bill Condon. Based on the novel *Father of Frankenstein.* (1 hr. 45 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema; Clearview's 59th Street East; Clearview's Metro Cinema.*

★**Hands on a Hard Body**—It's about one of those homespun real-life gothic events just crying out to be chronicled. Every year in Longview, Texas—population 70,000—an auto dealership stages a contest in which entrants are required to stand around a fully loaded Nissan hard-body pickup with at least one hand on the truck at all times. The last person standing wins. Seth Bindler, an NYU Film School grad, shot this film on video for less than the cost of the truck—around $15,000. It's not all that it might be, but Bindler doesn't turn the contestants into freaks or saps. Errol Morris might have turned this subject into a creepy-crawly sideshow, but it's probably best he didn't get wind of it. Weirdness this good deserves the plain treatment. (Rainer; 2/15/99) (1 hr. 37 mins.; PG) *CC Village East.*

Hilary & Jackie—Emily Watson is the celebrated British cellist Jacqueline du Pré, who developed multiple sclerosis at 28. With Rachel Griffiths as her sister Hilary. Based on the book by Hilary and Piers du Pré, *A Genius in the Family.* Directed by Anand Tucker. (2 hrs.; R) *Cineplex Odeon First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; UA Union Square; BAM Rose Cinemas; North Shore Towers.*

Hurly Burly—There's a whole lot of overacting going on in this David Rabe–adapted movie of his 1984 play, directed by Anthony Drazan. The cast, playing a mixed-nuts assortment of Hollywood trash, is impressive: Sean Penn, Kevin Spacey, Robin Wright Penn, Anna Paquin, Garry Shandling, Chazz Palminteri, Meg Ryan. But Rabe wants to turn the sex-swapping, coke-snorting L.A. eighties scene into a template for how spiritually bereft we all are, and it doesn't wash. The sleazoids in this movie don't stand for anything—not even themselves. They should call the film *A Bug's Life.* (Rainer; 1/18/99) (2 hrs. 2 mins.; R) *CC Village East.*

In Dreams—What in the blazes happens to Neil Jordan when he makes movies in this country? You can just about bet the farm on the likelihood that his British and Irish-made films will be wonderful and his American films will be bad. He's followed *The Butcher Boy,* one of the finest films of 1998, with this dollop of supernatural claptrap starring Annette Bening as a children's-book illustrator whose dreams are being commandeered Vulcan-mind-meld-style by a creepo killer (Robert Downey, Jr.). The pulp awfulness of this movie works upon your sensibilities like battery acid. (Rainer; 1/25/99) (1 hr. 52 mins.; R) *Loews Village Theatre VII; Bay Plaza.*

Jawbreaker—A group of popular girls accidently kill their best friend and try to cover it up. With Rose McGowan, Rebecca Gayheart, Julie Benz, and Judy Evan Greer. Written and directed by Darren Stein. (1 hr. 25 mins.; R) .

Just the Ticket—Andy Garcia is a ticket scalper who has to grow up and get out of the business or lose his girlfriend (Andie MacDowell). With Richard Bradford. (1 hr. 55 mins.; R) *Opens 2/26.*

★**The Last Days**—A superb documentary, directed by James Moll, from the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation centering on testimony from five Hungarian Jewish survivors of the Holocaust. The film's tone is ostensibly inspirational, but what stays with one, too, is the abomination of these people's lives. (Rainer; 2/15/99) (About 2 hrs.; NR) *Clearview's 62nd and Broadway.*

Life Is Beautiful—An Italian Jew and his son are taken to a concentration camp at the end of World War II, and the father attempts to hide the horror through fun and games. Starring Roberto Benigni, Sergio Bustric, Nicoletta Braschi, and Giorgio Cantarini. In Italian, with subtitles. (1 hr. 54 mins.; PG-13) *CC Angelika Film Center; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Loews 19th Street East; Paris Theatre; Clearview's 86th Street; Loews 72nd St. East; Loews 84th Street; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Cinemart; Main Street Cinemas; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Little Voice—A young girl who barely speaks but who can belt out impersonations of singing stars is persuaded to give a concert. Based on the play by Jim Cartwright. Starring Jane Horrocks, Brenda Blethyn, Michael Caine, and Ewan McGregor. Directed by Mark Herman. (1 hr. 39 mins.; R) *Clearview's Chelsea; CC Crown Gotham.*

Message in a Bottle—A bottle washes ashore and a woman reads its contents, a rapturous love letter from a man to the wife he lost. Theresa (Robin Wright Penn), a *Chicago Tribune* researcher, tracks down the man (Kevin Costner), who turns out to be a lovelorn North Carolina boatbuilder and all-around dreamboat. That love letter is purest Hallmark, and so is the movie. It seems designed to lull you into dumb-dumb-land, the better, perhaps, to pick your pocket. Paul Newman, playing the boatbuilder's father, steals what little there is to steal in this bowl of suds. Costner's acting goes from minimal to marginal. Wright Penn is a haze of banked fires. She's so unconscionably understanding of her man's grief at the loss of his wife that even the snifflers in the audience may want to guffaw. (Rainer; 2/22/99) (2 hrs. 6 mins.; PG-13) *CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Clearview's Chelsea West; Loews State; Loews Orpheum 7; UA Gemini; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion Theatre; Ridgewood; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

My Favorite Martian—The television show adapted for the screen. With Jeff Daniels, Christopher

Photograph courtesy of Film Forum/Photofest.

Lloyd, Elizabeth Hurley, Daryl Hannah, and Wallace Shawn. Directed by Donald Petrie. (1 hr. 28 mins.; PG) *Loews Village Theatre VII; Clearview's Chelsea; CC Sutton; UA Criterion Center; UA East; New Coliseum; Loews 84th Street; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Canarsie; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion Theatre; Ridgewood; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Jackson Triplex; Main Street Cinemas; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

★**My Name Is Joe**—Joe (Peter Mullan) is a recovering alcoholic who lives on the dole when he isn't doing odd jobs or coaching a hopeless soccer team of wayward boys from the poorest section of Glasgow. His affair with a health counselor (Louise Goodall) who recognizes his decency is remarkably touching. The director Ken Loach balls up Joe's story into a running-from-the-local-mob conclusion, but Mullan's performance is near-great. He prepares us for everything—Joe's princeliness and lyricism and bullish loyalties. (Rainer; 2/1/99) (1 hr. 32 mins.; R) *Cinema Village 12th St..*

October Sky—See Rainer, page 93. (About 2 hrs.; PG) *CC Village East; Clearview's 34th Street Showplace; Loews 19th Street East; UA Criterion Center; Clearview's 86th Street; Clearview's Beekman; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; UA Astoria; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

★**Office Space**—See Rainer, page 92. (1 hr. 40 mins.; PG) *Clearview's Chelsea; UA Criterion Center; UA Gemini; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Pavilion Theatre; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Midway; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island; Atrium.*

Patch Adams—Robin Williams plays a smiling-through-tears doctor who pushes the medicinal value of laughter in this goopy weepie that inexplicably was the holiday season's biggest hit. What's next for him—a remake of *Stella Dallas,* perhaps? He's playing out an old, sad showbiz story—the dulling out, at premium prices, of a once firebrand talent. (Rainer; 1/18/99) (About 2 hrs.; PG-13) *UA Movies at Bayside.*

★**Payback**—As Porter, the thug-on-a-mission, Mel Gibson is as mad as he's been since he was Max. His bootblacked hair is color-coordinated with his black jackets and blacker mood. He's a human projectile blasting through crimeland's inner sanctums. Shot and left for dead after a heist by his doublecrossing partner (Gregg Henry), he thinks only of one thing: Revenge and getting back his share—$70,000. The insanity of setting himself up as the walking dead for such a paltry sum never penetrates Porter's brain. Brian Helgeland, the gifted screenwriter of *Conspiracy Theory* and (with Curtis Hanson) *L.A. Confidential,* makes his directorial debut and, despite some production disagreements with Gibson that resulted in his walking off the set near the end of the shoot, it's a confident, startlingly funny piece of work. It's a killing comedy not for the squeamish. The terrific cast also includes Maria Bello, David Paymer, William Devane, Kris Kristofferson, and, unbilled, James Coburn. The film is based on the same book (Donald Westlake's *The Hunter,* written under the pseudonym Richard Stark) that John Boorman used for *Point Blank.* (Rainer; 2/22/99) (2 hrs.; R) *Loews Village Theatre VII; Clearview's 34th Street Showplace; Loews 19th Street East; Loews Astor Plaza; Loews New York Twin; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Metro Cinema; New Coliseum; Nova; Loews 84th Street; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Canarsie; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion Theatre; Ridgewood; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Jackson Triplex; Main Street Cinemas; Plaza; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Pizzicata—An American pilot lands in an Italian vineyard in 1943 and befriends a family filled with beautiful women. Written and directed by Edoardo Winspeare. (1 hr. 33 mins.; NR) *BAM Rose Cinemas.*

Playing by Heart—This is one of those tedious multi-character split-story jobs in which all the seemingly unconnected strands are tied up at the end. It's about looking for love in all the wrong/right places, and it features a large and impressive cast do-

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ing, for the most part, small and unimpressive things. (Rainer; 2/1/99) (2 hrs.; R) *CC Village East.*

The Prince of Egypt—There's a lot of smiting and plaguing going in this epic DreamWorks animated feature about Moses, but what really hurts is all the kitsch. The movie resembles one of those DeMille Biblical epics minus the hoochie-koochie he used to work in to show us what a terrible thing sin is. The mixture of 2- and 3-D effects is technically amazing, and at least one sequence, the parting of the Red Sea, is a knockout. But conceptually the film is cheeseball. Why should we applaud an animated movie for doing the same emptily monumental things as live-action directors? (Rainer; 12/14/98) (About 2 hrs.; G) *Cineplex Odeon Worldwide Cinemas; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Centre Sunnyside.*

The RugRats Movie—A new baby joins the Pickles family and sibling rivalry ensues. Based on the animated television show. Directed by Norton Virgien and Igor Kovalyov. (1 hr. 45 mins.; G) *Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex.*

Rushmore—Fun but overrated. Fifteen-year-old Max Fischer (Jason Schwartzmann) is a tenth-grader at Rushmore Academy who is on sudden-death academic probation despite (or because of) being captain of everything from the drama club to the Double-Team Dodgeball Society. His counterpart is Mr. Blume, a clinically depressed tycoon and the academy's chief benefactor, extremely well played by Bill Murray. Wes Anderson, the co-writer and director, has an affinity for deadpan obsessives and a fluky sense of comic timing. (Rainer; 12/21/98) (2 hrs.; R) *CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Clearview's Chelsea; CC Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; Loews State; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; Pavilion Theatre; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

★**Saving Private Ryan**—At the beginning, a group of American soldiers land on Omaha Beach, on D day. Led by Captain John Miller (Tom Hanks), they jump over the side and get hit under the water (we can actually see the bullets, slowed down by the sea, striking their targets). Many who make it out of the boats die in the first few yards of sand. Director Steven Spielberg rapidly shifts from one nightmare to another: When we are under the water, or inside the head of a stunned soldier, the sound collapses into an indistinct roar; the next second, we are above the water and the noise of bullets and mortar fire approaches agony. In this one scene, and in another battle at the end, Spielberg knocks into oblivion every World War II movie ever made. This is a marvelous film, though it needs to be said that the material between the two battle scenes isn't on their transcendent level. It begins as an epic, changes into an anecdote, and works toward a kind of moral fable. What is the value of a decent gesture—any decent gesture—in war? (Denby; 7/27/98) (2 hrs. 48 mins.; R) *UA Criterion Center; Cineplex Odeon First & 62nd St. Cinema; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; UA Marboro; UA Crossbay; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

The School of Flesh—A successful fashion designer falls for a dangerous young bartender. Starring Isabelle Huppert and Vincent Martinez. In French with English subtitles. (1 hr. 45 mins.; NR) *Opens 2/26 at Lincoln Plaza, Quad Cinemas, and* BAM *Rose Cinemas.*

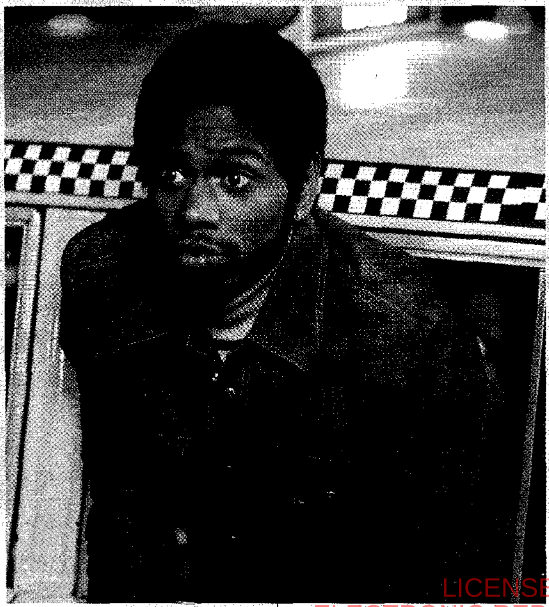
Shakespeare in Love—A fanciful romp about the young Will who wrote *Romeo and Juliet* and the romantic liaison that may have led to it. Joseph Fiennes is blandly dashing as the Bard and Gwyneth Paltrow, as his muse, is blandly pretty. She'd be better off if she didn't keep trying to set herself up as the Grace Kelly of the twentysomething set. She's best when she shows some steel, as in *Hard 8* and *Flesh and Bone.* (Rainer; 12/21/98) (2 hrs.; R) *CC Angelika Film Center; Clearview's 34th Street Showplace; Clearview's Chelsea; CC Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; UA Criterion Center; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Olympia Theatre; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; Pavilion Theatre; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

She's All That—The senior class president bets his best friend he can create a prom queen from the frumpiest girl in the school. Starring Freddie Prinze Jr., Jodi Lyn O'Keefe, Matthew Lillard, Usher Raymond, Paul Walker, Rachael Leigh Cook, Kieran Culkin, and Kevin Pollak. (1 hr. 26 mins.; PG-13) *CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews State; Cineplex Odeon First & 62nd St. Cinema; Loews Orpheum 7; New Coliseum; Nova; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Canarsie; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion Theatre; Ridgewood; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Jackson Triplex; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

★**A Simple Plan**—A crashed small plane with four million bucks in tow is discovered in a remote game preserve by three local townspeople. Theft, murder, double-crosses ensue. Director Sam Raimi is primarily known as a gonzo goremeister with a hyperkinetic visual style, but he's pared down his act here. In his new film, wintry rural Minnesota gets the dark, elemental treatment. The snowdrifts seem to be covering up some vast horror and the *noir* fatalism is limiting. Once again we are told that greed turns good men into bad—it doth make suckers of us all. But the action is compelling and the performances by Bill Paxton and Billy Bob Thornton, playing night-and-day brothers, as well as Brent Briscoe and Bridget Fonda, are superb. (Rainer; 12/14/98) (2 hrs.; R) *Loews Village Theatre VII; Loews 19th Street East; Cineplex Odeon First & 62nd St. Cinema; Sony Lincoln Square.*

Opening
Party Like It's 1981

Comedian Dave Chappelle (*Half Baked*) stars as a sweet-talking taxicab driver in *200 Cigarettes*, an ensemble comedy about a group of young, garishly dressed hipsters (like Courtney Love, Christina Ricci, Ben Affleck, and Kate Hudson) making their way to an East Village New Year's Eve party in 1981. Martha Plimpton's their host, and Chappelle, of course, gets them all there on time. Opens February 26.



Simply Irresistible—Sarah Michelle Gellar is a chef who uses her recipes to find love. (About 2 hrs.; PG-13) .

Steam: The Turkish Bath—A man inherits a Turkish bath from his aunt and discovers who she was and falls for the custodian's handsome son. Starring Alessandro Gassman. Directed by Ferzan Opetek. (1 hr. 34 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

Stepmom—Susan Sarandon is a divorced mother who develops a friendship of sorts with her ex-husband's new girlfriend (Julia Roberts). With Ed Harris. (2 hrs.; PG-13) *Bay Plaza.*

Tango—A tango dancer falls in love with his beautiful partner and clashes with her gangster boyfriend. With Miguel Àngel Solà and Mia Maestro. In Spanish with English subtitles. (1 hr. 55 mins.; PG-13) *CC Angelika Film Center; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

The 24 Hour Woman—Rosie Perez plays a TV producer for a frenetic morning talk show who finds herself unexpectedly pregnant. The movie is about how this workaholic realizes she's no superwoman. Perez is a pint-sized dynamo who doesn't get much support from the other players, including Marianne Jean-Baptiste and Patti Lupone. The co-writer and director Nancy Savoca juices us with real-life dilemmas about career vs. family only to dispel everything in a fairy-tale finale. It's fitting that Jerry Springer puts in an appearance. The movie has all the weight of one of Jerry's "Final Thoughts." (Rainer; 2/2/99) (1 hr. 35 mins.; R) *Nova; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone;* BAM *Rose Cinemas; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Ridgewood; Plaza; UA Crossbay II.*

The Thin Red Line—Terrence Malick's first movie in twenty years—an adaptation of James Jones's 1962 WWII novel about an Army platoon in Guadalcanal—brings us back to that same seventies fugue state of his in which all action is aestheticized until nothing is left but patterning and pretty pictures. Malick never saw a sunset he didn't want to emblematize. A lot of powerful actors turn up—including Nick Nolte and Sean Penn—but they're upstaged by Malick's froufrou flossiness. (Rainer; 1/4/99) (2 hrs. 46 mins.; R) *Clearview's Ziegfeld; Sony Lincoln Square; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Bayside.*

The Trio—A team of traveling pick-pockets get sexually entangled. With Jeanette Hain, Felix Eitner, and Götz George. Directed by Hermine Huntgeburth. In German with English subtitles. (1 hr. 37 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

20 Dates—A comedy in which single aspiring filmmaker Myles Berkowitz brings a movie camera with him when he goes on twenty very different dates. (1 hr. 28 mins.; R) *Opens 2/26.*

200 Cigarettes—An ensemble piece about various young New Yorkers heading to a New Year's Eve party in the East Village. With Paul Rudd, Courtney Love, Dave Chappelle, Martha Plimpton, Christina Ricci, and Ben Affleck. (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) *Opens 2/26.*

Varsity Blues—A coming-of-age comedy about a high-school football player. (1 hr. 46 mins.; R) *Loews Village Theatre VII; Loews State; UA Crossbay II.*

Waking Ned Devine—Compared to all the I.R.A.-themed movies we've been seeing lately, this swatch of stage-Irishness is a walk in the park. Two lifelong mates from Tully More—population 52—figure out that one of their neighbors has won the lottery. David Kelly and Ian Bannen are the dynamic duo who connive to get close to the money. They have such an easygoing rapport that you can almost forgive the fact that this film seems to have been produced strictly for the tourist trade. It would make the perfect in-flight movie on Aer-Lingus. (Rainer; 12/4/98) (1 hr. 31 mins.; PG) *Cineplex Odeon First & 62nd St. Cinema; Clearview's Olympia Theatre.*

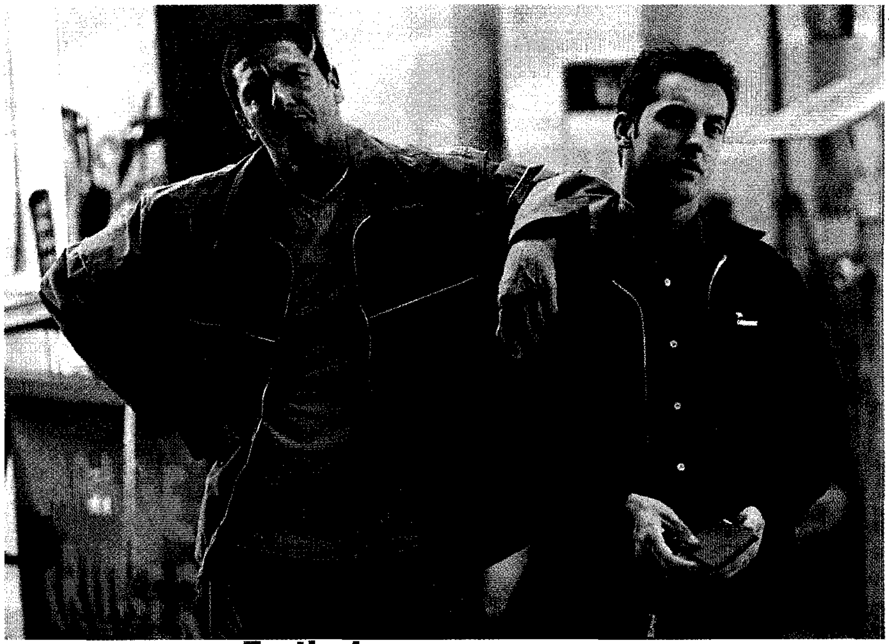
Manhattan

Below 14th Street

Art Greenwich Twin—Greenwich Ave. at 12th St. (505-CINE#616) *Elizabeth; The Hi-Lo Country.*

CC Angelika Film Center—18 W. Houston St. (995-2000) *Affliction; Life Is Beautiful; Shakespeare in Love; Tango.*

Photograph by Eli Reed/Paramount Pictures.



Festival

A Grand Tour

The French Institute's monthlong series "Celebration of Marseilles" focuses on the port city and its people as depicted in eight films, including 'Marius,' set on the thirties waterfront; Gérard Pirès's hit comedy 'Taxi' (above), written by Luc Besson; the 1997 French blockbuster 'Marius et Jeannette,' set among the blue-collar circles of the Estaque district; and 1995's 'Bye Bye,' a Gallic 'Mean Streets' set in hoodlum-filled tenement squalor. Starts March 2. See "Museums, Societies, Etc." for more info.

CC Village East—189 Second Ave., at 12th St. (529-6799) *American History X; Another Day in Paradise; The General; Hands on a Hard Body; Hurly Burly; October Sky; Playing by Heart.*

Cinema Village 12th St.—22 E. 12th St. (924-3364) *My Name Is Joe; Party Monster.*

Film Forum—209 W. Houston St. (727-8110) *Beshkempir—The Adopted Son; God Said, "Ha!".*

Quad Cinema—34 W. 13th St. (255-8800) *The Apple; Central Station; Dry Cleaning; Gods and Monsters; Steam: The Turkish Bath; The Trio.*

Loews Village Theatre VII—66 Third Ave., at 11th St. (982-0400) *In Dreams; My Favorite Martian; Payback; A Simple Plan; Varsity Blues.*

The Screening Room—54 Varick St. (below Canal) (334-2100) *The Celebration; Velvet Goldmine.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

UA Union Square—13th St. and Broadway (253-2225) *Blast From the Past; Hilary & Jackie; Jawbreaker; Little Voice; Message in a Bottle; Rushmore; Saving Private Ryan; She's All That; The 24 Hour Woman; The Thin Red Line; Waking Ned Devine.*

14th-41st Streets

CC Murray Hill Cinemas—160 E. 34th St. (689-6548) *Life Is Beautiful; Message in a Bottle; Rushmore; She's All That.*

Clearview's 34th Street Showplace—238 E. 34th St. (777-FILM#700) *October Sky; Payback; Shakespeare in Love.*

Clearview's Chelsea—260 W. 23rd St. (777-FILM#597) *Affliction; Blast From the Past; Little Voice; My Favorite Martian; Office Space; Rushmore; Shakespeare in Love; She's All That.*

Clearview's Chelsea West—333 W. 23rd St. (777-FILM#614) *Elizabeth; Message in a Bottle.*

Loews 19th Street East—890 Broadway, at 19th St. (260-8000) *Life Is Beautiful; October Sky; Payback; A Simple Plan.*

42nd-60th Streets

CC Cinema I, II, Third Ave.—1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (753-6022) *Rushmore; Shakespeare in Love.*

CC Crown Gotham—969 Third Ave., bet. 57th and 58th Sts. (759-2262) *Little Voice.*

CC Eastside Playhouse—919 Third Ave., bet. 55th and 56th Sts. (755-3020) *Central Station.*

CC Sutton—205 E. 57th St. (759-1411) *American History X; My Favorite Martian.*

Clearview's 59th Street East—239 E. 59th St. (777-FILM#615) *Gods and Monsters.*

Clearview's Ziegfeld—141 W. 54th St. (777-FILM#602) *The Thin Red Line.*

Guild 50th Street—33 W. 50th St. (757-2406) *Enemy of the State.*

Paris Theatre—4 W. 58th St. (688-3800) *Life Is Beautiful.*

Loews Astor Plaza—44th St. bet. Broadway and Eighth Ave. (869-8340) *Payback.*

Cineplex Odeon Coronet—993 Third Ave., bet. 59th and 60th Sts. (505-CINE#608) *Affliction; Blast From the Past.*

Loews State—1540 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (391-2900) *Message in a Bottle; Rushmore; She's All That; Varsity Blues.*

Cineplex Odeon Worldwide Cinemas—340 W. 50th St. (505-CINE#610) *Living Out Loud; Pleasantville; The Prince of Egypt; Touch of Evil; Virus; The Waterboy.*

UA Criterion Center—1514 Broadway, bet. 44th and 45th Sts. (354-0900) *Blast From the Past; Jawbreaker; My Favorite Martian; October Sky; Office Space; Saving Private Ryan; Shakespeare in Love.*

61st Street and Above, East Side

Clearview's 86th Street—125 E. 86th St. (777-FILM#604) *Life Is Beautiful; October Sky.*

Clearview's Beekman—1254 Second Ave., bet. 65th and 66th Sts. (777-FILM#606) *October Sky.*

Loews 72nd St. East—1230 Third Ave., bet. 71st and 72nd Sts. (879-1313) *Life Is Beautiful.*

Cineplex Odeon First & 62nd St. Cinema—400 E. 62nd St. (505-CINE#957) *Elizabeth; Hilary & Jackie; Jawbreaker; Saving Private Ryan; She's All That; A Simple Plan; Waking Ned Devine.*

Loews New York Twin—1271 Second Ave., bet. 66th and 67th Sts. (744-7339) *Payback.*

Loews Orpheum 7—1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (828-9738) *Blast From the Past; A Civil Action; Message in a Bottle; Payback; Shakespeare in Love; She's All That.*

UA East—1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (249-5100) *My Favorite Martian.*

UA Gemini—1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (832-1670) *Message in a Bottle; Office Space.*

61st Street and Above, West Side

Clearview's 62nd and Broadway—1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (777-FILM#864) *The Last Days.*

Clearview's Metro Cinema—2626 Broadway, bet. 99th and 100th Sts. (777-FILM#609) *Gods and Monsters; Payback.*

Clearview's Olympia Theatre—2770 Broadway, bet. 106th and 107th Sts. (777-FILM#613) *Shakespeare in Love; Waking Ned Devine.*

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas—30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway bet. 62nd and 63rd Sts. (757-2280) *Affliction; The Apple; Central Station; Children of Heaven; Hilary & Jackie; Tango.*

New Coliseum—701 W. 181st St. (740-1545) *Blast From the Past; My Favorite Martian; Payback; She's All That.*

Nova—3589 Broadway, bet. 147th and 148th Sts. (862-5728) *Payback; She's All That; The 24 Hour Woman.*

Loews 84th Street—2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (877-3600) *Jawbreaker; Life Is Beautiful; My Favorite Martian; Payback.*

Sony Lincoln Square—1998 Broadway, at 68th St. (336-5000) *Blast From the Past; A Civil Action; Message in a Bottle; October Sky; Office Space; Rushmore; Saving Private Ryan; Shakespeare in Love; She's All That; A Simple Plan; The Thin Red Line.*

Cineplex Odeon Regency—1987 Broadway, bet. 67th and 68th Sts. (505-CINE#585) *Elizabeth.*

Thalia Theater—250 W. 95th St. (864-7700) *Lonely In America.*

Bronx

Area Code 718

Bay Plaza—2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (320-3020) *Blast From the Past; In Dreams; Jawbreaker; Message in a Bottle; My Favorite Martian; October Sky; Office Space; Payback; The Prince of Egypt; The RugRats Movie; Rushmore; Saving Private Ryan; Shakespeare in Love; She's All That; Stepmom.*

Concourse Plaza—214 E. 161th St. (588-8800) *Blast From the Past; Jawbreaker; Message in a Bottle; My Favorite Martian; Payback; The RugRats Movie; She's All That; The 24 Hour Woman.*

Whitestone—2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson River Pkwy. (409-9037) *Blast From the Past; Enemy of the State; Jawbreaker; Message in a Bottle; My Favorite Martian; October Sky; Payback; The Prince of Egypt; The RugRats Movie; Rushmore; Saving Private Ryan; Shakespeare in Love; She's All That; The 24 Hour Woman.*

Brooklyn

Area Code 718

BAM Rose Cinemas—30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (623-2770) *The Apple; Central Station; Hilary & Jackie; Pizzicata; The 24 Hour Woman.*

Brooklyn Heights—70 Henry St. (596-7070) *Call theater for showtimes..*

Canarsie—9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (251-0700) *My Favorite Martian; Payback; She's All That.*

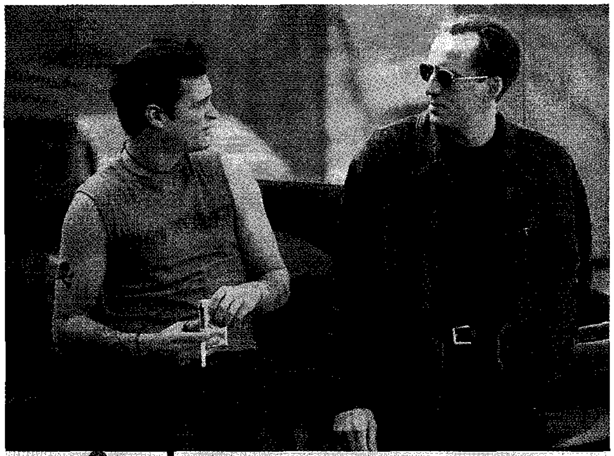
CO Alpine—6817 Fifth Ave., at 69th St. (777-FILM#580) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Fortway—6720 Ft. Hamilton Pkwy., at 68th St. (777-FILM#578) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Kenmore—Church Ave. nr. Flatbush Ave. (777-FILM#576) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Kings Plaza—5201 Kings Plaza; Flatbush Ave. at Ave. U (777-FILM#579) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Photograph courtesy of ARP.



Opening Dirty Pictures

In *8 mm*, Nicolas Cage is a detective who finds a snuff film among the belongings of a seemingly respectable dead man and, to determine its origin, begins a tour of porn's underworld (led by Joaquin Phoenix, above, with Cage). The Joel Schumacher film starts Friday, February 26.

CO Kingsway—946 Kings Hwy. at Coney Island Ave. (777-FILM#577) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Cobble Hill—265 Court St. (596-9113) *Call theater for showtimes..*

Kent Triplex—Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (338-3371) *Message in a Bottle; My Favorite Martian; She's All That.*

Linden Boulevard Multiplex—Linden Blvd. and Eldert Lane (277-0303) *Blast From the Past; Down in the Delta; Enemy of the State; Jawbreaker; Message in a Bottle; My Favorite Martian; October Sky; Payback; The Prince of Egypt; The RugRats Movie; Saving Private Ryan; She's All That; The 24 Hour Woman.*

Pavilion Theatre—188 Prospect Park West (369-0838) *Blast From the Past; Message in a Bottle; My Favorite Martian; Office Space; Payback; Rushmore; Shakespeare in Love; She's All That.*

Ridgewood—55-27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (821-5993) *Message in a Bottle; My Favorite Martian; Payback; She's All That; The 24 Hour Woman.*

UA Marboro—6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (232-4000) *Message in a Bottle; Saving Private Ryan; She's All That; The Thin Red Line.*

UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay—3907 Shore Pkwy, off Exit 9 at Belt Pkwy. (615-1700) *Blast From the Past; Jawbreaker; Life Is Beautiful; Message in a Bottle; October Sky; Office Space; Payback; Rushmore; She's All That.*

Queens

Area Code 718

Centre Sunnyside—42-17 Queens Blvd. (361-6869) *Babe: Pig in the City; Blast From the Past; Elizabeth; Message in a Bottle; My Favorite Martian; Payback; The Prince of Egypt; She's All That.*

Cinemart—106-03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72nd Rd., Forest Hills (261-2244) *Affliction; Blast From the Past; Life Is Beautiful; My Favorite Martian; Payback.*

CO Cinema City—183-15 Horace Harding Expy., at 183rd St., Fresh Meadows (777-FILM#592) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Fresh Meadows—Eastbound Service Rd. at 190th St. (777-FILM#619) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Jackson Triplex—82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (478-6777) *My Favorite Martian; Payback; She's All That.*

Main Street Cinemas—72-66 Main St. (263-4828) *Blast From the Past; Life Is Beautiful; Message in a Bottle; My Favorite Martian; Payback; She's All That.*

North Shore Towers—27-10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (229-7702) *A Civil Action; Elizabeth; Hilary & Jackie.*

Plaza—103–14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (639-0012) *Payback; The 24 Hour Woman.*

Sony Bay Terrace—211-01 26th Ave. and Bell Blvd., Bayside (428-4040) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Sony Elmwood—57-02 Hoffman Dr., Elmhurst (429-4770) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Sony Trylon—98-81 Queens Blvd., at 66th Ave., Rego Park (459-8944) *Call theater for showtimes.*

UA Astoria—28-60 Steinway St. (726-1279) *Blast From the Past; Message in a Bottle; October Sky; Office Space; Payback; She's All That.*

UA Crossbay—94-11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (848-1738) *Blast From the Past; Payback; Saving Private Ryan.*

UA Crossbay II—92-10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (641-5330) *Jawbreaker; Message in a Bottle; My Favorite Martian; Office Space; She's All That; The 24 Hour Woman; Varsity Blues.*

UA Midway—108-22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills (261-8572) *Elizabeth; Jawbreaker; Message in a Bottle; October Sky; Office Space; Patch Adams; Saving Private Ryan; Shakespeare in Love; The Thin Red Line.*

UA Movies at Bayside—38-39 Bell Blvd., at 39th Ave. (225-7711) *Life Is Beautiful; October Sky; Patch Adams; Payback; The Thin Red Line.*

UA Movieworld—242-02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (423-7200) *Blast From the Past; Message in a Bottle; My Favorite Martian; October Sky; Office Space; Payback; Saving Private Ryan.*

Staten Island

Area Code 718

Atrium—680 Arthur Kill Rd., nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (317-8300) *Blast From the Past; Life Is Beautiful; Message in a Bottle; My Favorite Martian; October Sky; Office Space; Payback; The RugRats Movie; Shakespeare in Love; She's All That.*

UA Hylan Plaza—107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (351-0805) *Affliction; Message in a Bottle; My Favorite Martian; Payback; She's All That.*

UA Movies at Staten Island—141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (983-9600) *Blast From the Past; Jawbreaker; Life Is Beautiful; Message in a Bottle; My Favorite Martian; October Sky; Office Space; Payback; Rushmore; Saving Private Ryan; Shakespeare in Love; She's All That.*

Museums, Societies, Etc.

American Museum of the Moving Image—"Jazz on Film." Through 2/28: Films about jazz. 2/27: "A Tribute to Aram Avakian." *Jazz on a Summer's Day* (1959) and *Mickey One* (1965). 2/28: *Imagine the Sound* (1981), *Louie Bluie* (1985), and *The International Sweethearts of Rhythm* (1986). AMMI: 36-01 35th Ave., Astoria, Queens (718-784-0077). Tickets, $4.50–$8.50. Members and children under 4, free.

Anthology Film Archives—2/25: *Parsifal* (1982). 2/23: *The Altar Boys* (1989) and *Leçon de vie* (1995). "New Filmmakers." 2/24: Shorts and *The Room* (1998). 2/24: Shorts from the Filmmakers' Cooperative. 2/25–2/27: *In the Cycling Park* (1996), *What Farocki Taught* (1998), and *Lowell Celebrates Kerouac* (1998). 2/26–2/28: *Freaks Uncensored! A Human Sideshow* (1998). 2/26: *Zorns Lemma* (1970). 2/27: *Serene Velocity* (1970). 2/28: Shorts by Genêt, Frank & Leslie, Jacobs & Fleischner, Levitt, Maas. 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110); $7.

Brooklyn Museum of Art—"Black Beyond Borders." 2/28: *Remembering Wei Yi-fang, Remembering Myself: An Autobiography* (1995), *Awara Soup* (1995), and *Black Dju* (1995). 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000, ext. 230); $6; $4 for members, students, and senior citizens.

Cinema Classics—"Paranoia" film series. Single or double feature $5. 332 E. 11th St.; call 675-6692 for info.

Columbia Pictures Film Festival—Through 2/25: A 12-film retrospective to celebrate the 75th anniversary of Columbia Pictures, with *The Bridge on the River Kwai* (1957), *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977), *Dr. Strangelove* (1964), *Easy Rider* (1969), and *Tootsie* (1982). Sony Lincoln Square Theater.

Columbia University—"Kurosawa Remembered." Through 3/4: Eight films directed by Akira Kurosawa. 2/23: *Yojimbo* (1961) and *The Bad Sleep Well* (1950). 3/2: *Throne of Blood* (1957) and *High and Low* (1963). Miller Theater, Columbia University, Broadway and 116th St. (854-7799); $10; students and seniors, $5.

Czech Center New York—2/25: *Loves of a Blonde* (1965). Free. 1109 Madison Ave. at 83rd St. Call 288-0830 for more info.

A Different Light—2/28: *X, Y & Zee* (1971). 7 P.M. 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850); free.

Film Society of Lincoln Center—(The Walter Reade Theater) "A Survey of Cuban Cinema." Through 2/25: Thirty films made in Cuba during the last forty years. "Documented Fictions: The Films of Gillo Pontecorvo." 2/26–3/4: Films and an appearance by the Italian director. "Great Performers." 2/25: Benedetti-Michelangeli and Beethoven. 2/28: Beethoven. "Movies for Kids." 2/27: *Wind in the WIllows* (1997). "Independents Night." 3/2: Jay Anania's *Long Time Since* (1998). Call 875-5600 for info. 65 W. 65th St., plaza level (875-5600); regular screenings $8.50–$15.

French Institute—"A Celebration of Marseilles." 3/2: *Marius* (1931). Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160); $7.

Japan Society—"Anime: The History of Japanese Animated Films." Through 2/26: A comprehensive look of the genre, from the forties to the present. 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015); $5 members, $8 nonmembers, students, and senior citizens.

Museum of Modern Art—"Postwar Italian Cinema." Through 3/2: Twelve significant Italian films that remain unreleased or have fallen out of distribution in this country. "BritDoc: A History of British Documentary Film." Through 3/22: A 27-part survey of classic and unknown British documentaries from 1906 to 1986. "Film Follies by Stuart Klawans." 2/25: Films by Price. "Special Screening." 2/26: *The Black Cat* (1934). "New Documentaries." 2/25–2/26: *Gypsy Heart* (1998). "Cineprobe." 3/1: *Swallow* (1995) and *Shulie* (1997). "Academy-Award Nominated Films." 2/27–2/28: 1999's Oscar nominees in the documentary category. 3/4: Foreign-language film nominee *The Grandfather* (1998). 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9400); free with $9.50 admission.

New York Film Academy—"Japanese Film Festival." 2/25–3/7: A sampling of Japanese film by Nagisa Oshima, Akira Kurosawa, Juzo Itami, and Hiroshi Teshigahara. Call for program info. Tickets $5. 100 E. 17th St. (674-4300).

New York Public Library—"Documentaries of Alan and Susan Raymond." 2/25: *I Am a Promise* (1993). "New African Cinema." 2/24: *Keita, the Heritage of the Griot* (1995). Donnell Media Center, 20 W. 53rd St. (621-0619); free.

Ocularis—2/28: Werner Herzog's *Aguirre, Wrath of God* (1973). 70 N. 6th St., Williamsburg, Brooklyn. $5. Call 718-388-8713 for info.

The Screening Room—Sunday brunch: *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961). Call theater for info. 54 Varick St. (334-2100); $8 ($5 for Sunday brunch patrons).

Tonic—"Monday Night Film Series." Call theater for information. Tickets, $4. 107 Norfolk St. For more info, call 358-7503.

YWCA Cine-Club—"A Celebration of Japanese Cinema." 2/27–2/28: *The Men Who Tread on the Tiger's Tail* (1945). 3/27–3/28: *Tokyo Story* (1953). 610 Lexington Ave., at 53rd St. (735-9717); $6 members, $7 nonmembers.

Photograph by Christine Loss/Columbia/TriStar.

theater

Tennessee Williams...Harold Pinter

Opening Backstage Trauma

The Moss Hart renaissance continues apace with the revival of *Light Up the Sky,* his 1948 musical about the perils of opening out of town. St. Bart's Players present; opens February 25.

Broadway

Previews and Openings

Annie Get Your Gun—Bernadette Peters plays the sharp-tongued, sharpshootin' gal from Cincinnati who eclipses her lover, Frank Butler (played by Tom Wopat), in Buffalo Bill's traveling Wild West Show. Irving Berlin did the lyrics and score; Peter Stone updated the book. $35–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 3/4 opening. *Marquis Theatre, 1535 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (307-4100).*

Band in Berlin—A new musical about the Comedian Harmonists, a German sextet that rose to prominence in the twenties but collapsed by the mid-thirties, when the Nuremberg Laws required the three Jewish members to leave the group. Written by Susan Feldman; performed by real-life sextet Hudson Shad. $65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 3/7 opening. *Helen Hayes Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

The Lion in Winter—Laurence Fishburne and Stockard Channing, Tony winners both, star in James Goldman's famous drama about royal-family squabbling. Michael Mayer directs. $60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. In previews for a 3/11 opening. *Roundabout's Stage Right, 1530 Broadway, at 45th St. (719-1300).*

Not About Nightingales—Vanessa Redgrave salvaged this Tennessee Williams play, written by the author when he was 26 and then summarily discarded; her brother, Corin, stars in it, and Trevor Nunn directs. The drama, based on an actual prison uprising Williams read about in the papers, is about a young inmate who falls in love with the warden's secretary and must choose sides when his fellow prisoners rebel. $65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 2/25 opening. *Circle-in-the-Square Theatre, 1633 Broadway, at 50th St. (239-6200).*

Now Playing

Art—I sympathize with this play by Yasmina Reza. Serge spends 200,000 francs on a five-by-four painting by the renowned Antrios that is all white except for some diagonal scratches. His friend Marc considers this Antrios shit, and Serge's purchase of it an insult to their friendship. He tries to enlist the third of our musketeers, Yvan, to side with him. But confronted with Serge and the painting, Yvan does what he does best: He wavers. Reza's cunning dialogue has been fluently Englished by Christopher Hampton. (Simon: 3/16/98 and 10/5/98.) Now with Judd Hirsch, Joe Morton, and George Wendt. $45–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 3/1/98. *Royale Theatre, 242 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Beauty and the Beast—A musical based on a movie based on a fairy tale. Toni Braxton plays the girl; James Barbour plays the (hairy) boy. Lyrics by Tim Rice and Howard Ashman; music by Alan Menken. $22.50–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 4/18/94. *Palace Theatre, 1564 Broadway, at 47th St. (307-4100).*

The Beauty Queen of Leenane—Martin McDonagh's Drama Desk Award–winning drama about an old woman's attempts to sabotage her daughter's love life. $20–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Walter Kerr Theatre, 219 W. 48th St. (239-6200).*

The Blue Room—Nicole Kidman—!!!—and Iain Glen each play five roles in David Hare's modern adaptation of *La Ronde,* Arthur Schnitzler's classic story of interconnected couples and sexual anxieties. $15–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Cort Theatre, 138 W. 48th St. (239-6200).*

Cabaret—The Roundabout is to be roundly applauded for re-creating Sam Mendes's 1993 London production, even if with some diminishment. Aided by Rob Marshall as co-director and choreographer, Mendes confirms his directorial reputation with the nightclub scenes. Joe Masteroff's refurbished book emphasizes the squalor of 1930 Berlin nightlife and the bisexuality of Clifford, the writer-hero. The supporting cast delivers staunchly. Shortcomings notwithstanding, this revival has enough to satisfy all but the most fastidious. (Simon: 3/30/98.) Starring Jennifer Jason Leigh and Alan Cumming. $65–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8:00, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. Opened 3/19/98. *Studio 54, 254 W. 54th St. (239-6200).*

Cats—Now and for the foreseeable future. By Andrew Lloyd Webber, of course, with an assist from T. S. Eliot. $37.50–$70. Mon. and Tues. at 8, Wed. at 2 and 8, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. Opened: 10/7/82. *Winter Garden Theater, 1634 Broadway, at 50th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Chicago—It was a gamble to transfer the Encores! production of this musical to Broadway, but since it's about women who kill their men and the mercenary lawyer who gets them off, gambling seems like the merest peccadillo. Minimalism prevails in this production. All is concise, calibrated, calculated, but nothing is stinted on. Bebe Neuwirth does a scissors kick or two with sprightly kittenishness and superhuman timing. But Karen Ziemba, a lovely dancer and likable singer, radiates innocent chirpiness that is all wrong for Roxie, so magisterially created by Ann Reinking, brassily sexy and silkenly skewering. (Simon: 11/30/98.) $20–$75. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. Opened 11/14/96. *Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Death of a Salesman—This *Salesman* is a hard but efficacious sell. Miller put his finger on our prime weakness: a gullibility to the wiles of salesmanship. "I sell, therefore I am" is the neo-Cartesian maxim Willy is meant to embody and explicate. Rightly, Miller embeds this value system in a business, social, and family context, but the interaction of the elements is achieved more by contrivance than by a sense of the inevitable. Yet most of the acting is splendid. Brian Dennehy is a man truly at the end of his tether, letting us in on every step of his decline via naïve optimism, disregard of reality, aging, and capitalist callousness. Elizabeth Franz settles into a quietly and thoroughly moving Linda. Kevin Anderson welds Biff's duality as unmoored drifter and canny *raisonneur* into a totally believable and heartrending amalgam. $45–$65.

Ground Rules:

Except where noted, Broadway shows begin at 8 and are dark Monday. Wallet-watchers should keep in mind the TKTS booths, where discount tickets are available (for that day's performance only) to many Broadway and Off Broadway shows. TKTS booths are at Broadway and 47th St. and 2 World Trade Center, mezzanine level; call 212-768-1818 for more info. Involved in a production and want to submit details for a possible listing? Call 212-508-0740.

Photograph by Carol Rosegg.

Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Eugene O'Neill Theatre, 230 W. 49th St. (239-6200).*

Electra—Zoë Wanamaker plays Agamemnon's grieving, vengeful daughter in this new production of Sophocles' play, ably adapted by Frank McGuinness, who updated last season's Tony-winning *A Doll's House*. Also starring Claire Bloom. $35–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Ethel Barrymore Theatre, 243 W. 47th St. (239-6200).*

Footloose—Kevin Bacon, sadly, is not a part of this maxi-musical adaptation of the 1984 movie, but the lead does have his haircut. Let's hear it for the boy! $20–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened 10/22/98. *Richard Rodgers Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. (307-4100).*

Fosse—A tribute to the late choreographer-director, whose swivelin'-hips-and-bowler-hat aesthetic came roaring back with the revival of *Chicago*. $55–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Broadhurst Theatre, 235 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

Jekyll & Hyde—Man turns into beastly man, all in the name of science. Book and lyrics by Leslie Bricusse, music by Frank Wildhorn. $45–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8; Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Plymouth Theatre, 236 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Les Misérables—The implacable Inspector Javert hounding the innocent ex-convict Jean Valjean; the pathetic Fantine, wronged by the entire world, dying as she entrusts her daughter, Cosette, to the now-prosperous Mayor Valjean; the dastardly Thénardiers bringing up Cosette as a scullion while cosseting their own daughter, Eponine—what a story! Just synopsizing the plot brings tears to the iciest eyes. (Simon: 3/31/97.) $15–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

The Lion King—This spectacle rightfully earns that most abused of epithets: *magical*. Kiddies will delightedly swallow it whole, unless they are tiny and flappable. But this is the one such show adults will feast on, too, mostly because of the wonders wrought by Julie Taymor, who designed and directed this cornucopia of dazzlements. Puppetry from East and West is put to superlative use, yet the actors, singers, and dancers are accorded enough humanity to ply their anthropomorphic skills. And Taymor has found ways to transmute the strictly cartoonish bravura of the big-screen Lion King onto a stage so that nothing is lost in translation. (Simon: 12/1/97). $20–$80. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. *New Amsterdam Theater, 214 W. 42nd St. (307-4747).*

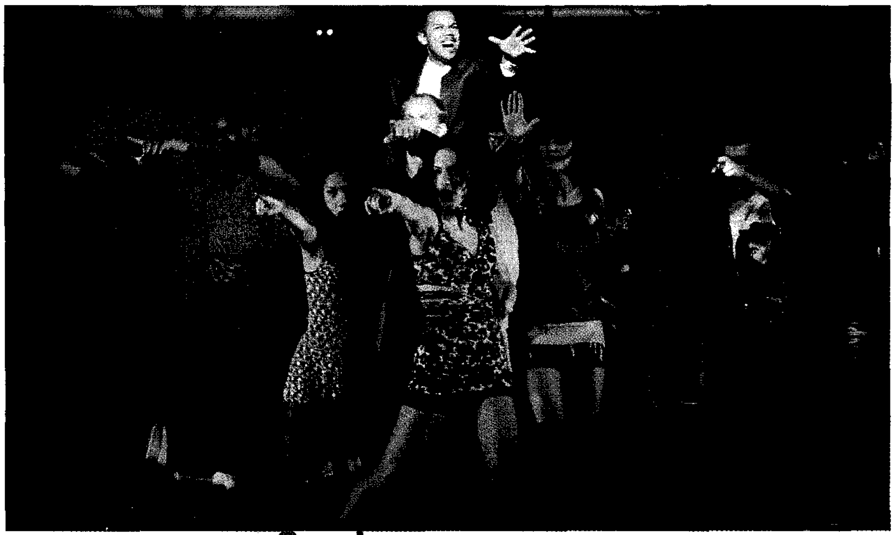
Miss Saigon—This reworking of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, set in Vietnam during the fall of Saigon, is now one of Broadway's ten longest-running musicals. Music by Claude-Michel Schonberg; lyrics by Alain Boublil and Richard Maltby Jr.; directed by Nicholas Hytner. $15–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 4/11/91. *Broadway Theater, 1681 Broadway, at 53rd St. (239-6200).*

Night Must Fall—Another Broadway revival of an old spine-tingler, this time with Matthew Broderick as the charming sociopath. Judy Parfitt plays the elderly English woman who employs him; John Tillinger directs. $25–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Lyceum Theatre, 149 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Parade—A musical about the wrongful conviction of a factory manager for the murder of a young white girl. Book by Alfred Uhry, music by Jason Robert Brown, and directed by Hal Prince. $40–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 2/28. *Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (239-6200).*

The Phantom of the Opera—Nine leads, ten years, and roughly 7 million theatergoers later, Andrew Lloyd Webber's blockbuster continues to pack them in. $15–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 1/26/88. *Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Ragtime—A musical based on E. L. Doctorow's historical novel, with a book by Terrence McNally and music by the composer-lyricist team of Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens. The epic braids the fates of three fictitious families—one black, one Jewish, one Wasp—and an assortment of historical characters. $31–$125. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Ford Center for the Performing Arts, 213 W. 42nd St. (307-4100).*



Opening High Rent

The New York Theatre Workshop has already launched one musical about the sick, hip, and tattered types of the East Village, so why not another about their jaded and wealthy counterparts of the West Village, set in the mid-eighties? The songful version of Jay McInerney's 'Bright Lights Big City,' also brought to life by 'Rent' director Michael Greif, opens February 24. The line to see it is already forming—though stakeouts this time are probably catered.

Rent—The late Jonathan Larson's reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème* as it might be lived by a gaggle of contemporary sick and hip types living in the East Village. $35–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Nederlander Theater, 208 W. 41st St. (307-4100). 2 hrs. 45 mins.*

The Scarlet Pimpernel—The show about romance, honor, the French Revolution, and, most important, fabric. Pop composer Frank Wildhorn (*Jekyll & Hyde*) did the score. Nan Knighton has recently revised her book, adapted from Baroness Orczy's novel for the stage. Douglas Sills stars. $20–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Minskoff Theatre, 200 W. 45th St. (307-4100).*

Side Man—*A must.* This enjoyable play by Warren Leight is about sidemen, yesteryear's second-tier jazz musicians who hired out as supplementary players to various bands, and about their women. It is narrated by Clifford, the son of Gene, a trumpet player, and Terry, a sweet thing turned bitter. As the play moves from 1985 to 1953 and back, we hear about his parents' courtship, his birth, and the parents' growing estrangement as he grows up. We also get glimpses of the lives of Gene's fellow sidemen. As things move near-imperceptibly from comedy to drama, we relish the jive, the jokes, the frustrations enacted by seven actors in a production neatly tied together by Michael Mayer's apt direction. (Simon: 3/23/98.) Now with Christian Slater. $25–$60. Tues. at 8, Wed. at 2 and 8, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, and Sun. at 3. *Golden Theatre, 252 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Smokey Joe's Cafe: The Songs of Leiber and Stoller—They say the neon lights are bright on Broadway, and when this show breezes into New York City, people gonna scrape and bow. A tip, tip, tip, young blood: Buy yourself a ticket, sit down in the very first row. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. $65–$75. *At the Virginia Theatre, 245 W. 52nd St. (239-6200)?* Uh-huh. *2 hrs. 10 mins.*

The Sound of Music—Returns to Broadway for the first time since its 1959 premiere. Hum along; bring the kids. Rebecca Luker, who played a memorable Magnolia in *Show Boat*, plays the nun turned governess, and Dennis Parlato plays the widower captain. $30–$75. Tues. at 8, Thurs. at 7, Fri. and Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7; Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. Opened 3/12/98. *Martin Beck Theatre, 302 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Titanic—What it lacks in suspense it makes up for in Tony awards (five, in 1997, including Best Musical). Music and lyrics by Maury Yeston; book by Peter Stone. Directed by Richard Jones. $45–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 4/23/97. *Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 205 W. 46th St. (307-4100).*

You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown—Happiness is, potentially, the revival of this musical, directed by Michael Mayer and starring Anthony Rapp. The book, lyrics, and music are by Clark Gesner, based on Charles M. Schulz's *Peanuts* comic strip. $15–$75. Tues.–Thurs. at 7:30, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 1 and 5:30. *Ambassador Theatre, 219 W. 49th St. (239-6200).*

Off Broadway

Previews and Openings

Betty's Summer Vacation—A new play by Christopher Durang (*Sex and Longing, Baby With the Bathwater*) about a summer sojourn gone awry. Nicholas Martin directs. $37.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. In previews for a 3/14 opening. Through 3/28. *Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. (279-4200).*

Bright Lights Big City—A new musical by Paul Scott Goodman, based on Jay McInerney's 1984 novel about a callow young New Yorker's descent into cocaine hell. Directed by Michael Greif (*Rent*). $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3 and 8. In previews for a 2/24 opening. *New York Theatre Workshop, 29 E. 4th St. (460-5475).*

Everybody's Ruby—Phylicia Rashad plays Zora Neale Hurston in this new Thulani Davis play about Ruby McCollum, a married black woman who shot the most prominent white doctor in Live Oak, Florida, amid allegations of a sex scandal. $40. Tues., Wed., and Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. Previews begin 2/23 for a 3/8 opening. *Public Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (239-6200).*

Halfway Home—Diane Bank's new play about a Manhattan tour-bus guide who returns to the Iowa family she spurned ten years before. Presented by the New Group. $15–$30. Mon. at 7, Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 4 and 8. In previews for a

Photograph by Joan Marcus.

3/3 opening. *Theater at St. Clements, 423 W. 46th St. (279-4200).*

The Hothouse—The Atlantic Theater Company revives Harold Pinter's 1958 comedy about a group of muddling bureaucrats in an unspecified government institution. $35–$40. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 7. In previews for a 2/25 opening. *Atlantic Theater, 336 W. 20th St. (239-6200).*

Murder in America—A new play by Allen Blumberg about millennial mayhem: The economy's in shambles, Bolshevism is on the rise, and hooligans have inherited the earth. $25. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2:30 and 7. In previews for a 2/23 opening. *McGinn/Cazale Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (279-4200).*

Snakebit—After a limited run in a tiny space, David Marshall Grant's play—about a neurotic actor, his fretting wife, and their freshly-dumped friend—gets the theater and open-ended engagement it deserves. Naked Angels presents. $17.50–$47.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. In previews for a 3/1 opening. *Century Center, 111 E. 15th St. (239-6200).*

Now Playing

Ashes to Ashes—David Strathairn stars in this 1996 Harold Pinter play about a marriage in crisis. $24–$48. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30; Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. Through 5/9. *Gramercy Theatre, 127 E. 23rd St. (777-4900).*

Beautiful Thing—Jonathan Harvey's 1993 play (and later, acclaimed film) about two working-class teenage boys who fall in love. $45–$47.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Cherry Lane Theatre, 38 Commerce St. (239-6200).*

Blue Man Group: Tubes—Smart silliness, with toilet paper, neon-colored paint, cereal, etc. Wildly inventive, and appropriate for just about everyone—kids, adults, foreigners, haters and lovers of performance art. $39–$49. Tues., Wed., Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 4 and 7. *Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. (254-4370).*

Captains Courageous, The Musical—As the title says, the musical version of the Rudyard Kipling novel about the spoiled son of a wealthy industrialist. Treat Williams and Brandon Espinoza star; Frederick Freyer did the music, Patrick Cook did the book and lyrics. $50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 4. *Manhattan Theatre Club, 131 W. 55th St. (581-1212).*

The Chemistry of Change—Marlene Meyer's new comedy about a scheming dearie who surfs from husband to husband, supporting her family with the divorce settlements. Starring a cast of veterans; directed by the talented Lisa Peterson. $30. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3. Through 3/7. *Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. (239-6200).*

Collected Stories—Donald Margulies's almost-Pulitzer-winning play about the friendship between a protégée and her mentor. Uta Hagen and Lorca Simons star. $42.50–$47.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 2/28. *Lucille Lortel Theatre, 121 Christopher St. (239-6200).*

A Couple of Blaguards—Frank and Malachy McCourt's stage version of their growing-up story, performed by actors Mickey Kelly and Shay Duffin. $40–$42.50. Mon., Tues., Thurs., and Fri. at 8; Sat. and Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Triad Theatre, 158 W. 72nd St. (799-4599).*

De la Guarda—A show that's part carnival, part rock concert, and almost entirely airborne. Dress in tatters; bring aspirin. $37.50–$45. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. *Daryl Roth Theatre, 20 Union Square East, at 15th St. (239-6200).*

Dream City Twosome—Tony Howarth's romantic story about a vagabond and a pretty girl who lives in a park. $35. Wed.-Sat at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 3/28. *Irish Arts Center, 553 W. 51st St. (581-4125).*

The Eros Trilogy—A three-paneled work by Nicky Silver connecting mothers and sons. Starring Zak Orth, T. Scott Cunningham, and the always-formidable Betty Buckley. $35. Mon.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8. Through 2/27. *Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. (353-3874).*

Fantasticks—The musical perennial that, happily, refuses to go away. $35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 7, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 5/3/60. *Sullivan St. Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St. (674-3838).*

Far East—A new play from A. R. Gurney about a young American Navy lieutenant who finds himself caught between the wife of his commanding officer and the woman he loves. Starring Michael Hayden. $50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Lincoln Center's Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (239-6200).*

Forbidden Broadway Cleans Up!—Gerard Alessandrini's newest update of his long-running musical spoof poking fun at the assorted absurdities of the Great White Way. $45–$47.50. Mon. and Wed.–Fri. at 8:15; Sat. at 2:30 and 8:15; Sun. at 3:30 and 7:30. Food and drink available/optional. *Stardust Theatre, Broadway at 51st St. (239-6200).*

Hedwig and the Angry Inch—Michael Cerveris stars in John Cameron Mitchell's stunning rock concert–cum–musical, in which a German transsexual achieves self-actualization, not to mention tabloid fame, through songwriting. $20–$49.50. Mon., Wed., and Thurs. at 8; Fri. at 8 and 11; Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. *Jane Street Theatre at the Hotel Riverview Ballroom, 113 Jane St. (239-6200).*

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change—A revue about heterosexual love—an amusingly quaint subject these days. $47.50–$50. Mon. and Tues. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (239-6200).*

James Naughton: Street of Dreams—It's two hours of crooning from the two-time Tony marvy James Naughton. $50. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 3/14. *Promenade Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (239-6200).*

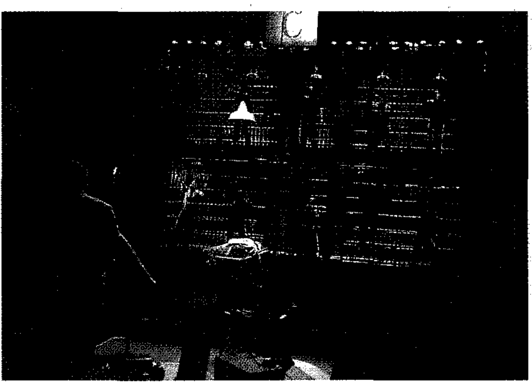
Killer Joe—Tracy Letts's new (and first) play about a dysfunctional family in a Texas trailer park. $47.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 5, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30. *Soho Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. (239-6200).*

Late Nite Catechism—Maripat Donovan as a parochial-school-teaching nun backed by a magisterium of unassailable moral authority and some mean wrist action with a ruler. $35. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 5. *St. Luke's Church Annex, 308 W. 46th St. (239-6200).*

The Mineola Twins—Swoosie Kurtz stars in this new play by Paula Vogel, author of the Pulitzer-winning *How I Learned to Drive,* about womanhood in suburbia. Directed by Joe Mantello. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. *Roundabout Theatre Company, 1530 Broadway, at 45th St. (719-9300).*

The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told—The newest play by Paul Rudnick, wicked author of *Addams Family Values, In & Out,* and various bits of acclaimed gay fantasia. In the author's words: "It's a comedy about God, if that's not redundant." $35–$47.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3 and 7.

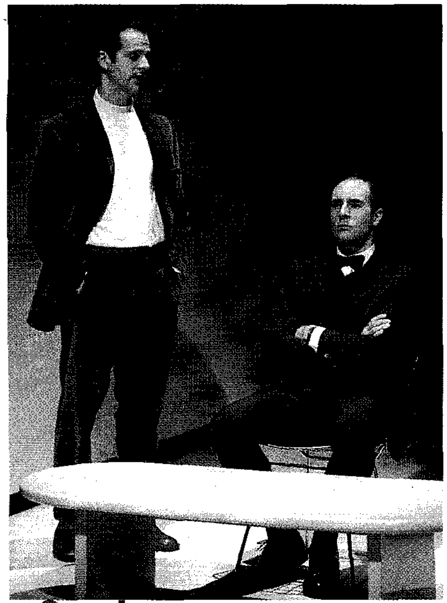
Opening
Prison Sells



Honestly, Richard Hoover assures: Bondage is not his thing. That he has become an expert designer of beautiful, terrible penitentiaries is a mere accident of timing and Hollywood fashion; it is not, to use his words, because he is "perverse" or "into prisons per se." Costa-Gavras first asked him to draft one for the film *Last Dance;* then Tim Robbins asked him to do one for *Dead Man Walking,* which he did. By the time Vanessa Redgrave had unearthed *Not About Nightingales,* the drama a young Tennessee Williams wrote about an inmate uprising, why, Hoover was so well acquainted with jailhouse architecture he was practically *dreaming* in steel—as any man would be if he'd just visited 30 prisons, Angola and Sing Sing among them. Hoover sent more than 50 sketches of possible set designs for *Nightingales* to Trevor Nunn, who was directing the play at the Royal National Theatre of Great Britain. Nunn liked them. He hired Hoover. Wisely, as it turns out—the set just won both the Evening Standard and London Critics' Circle awards. The drama opens here this Thursday at Circle-in-the-Square, with much of that set still intact. "It's just a gray palette," says Hoover, 53, who did most of his training at the Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis. "I'm interested in the material as material, to see what it can do." Here, that material is steel—eight tons of it, in Hoover's estimation—and what it can do is inspire that very familiar mix of awe and terror. The set feels on the one hand like the nave of a church, with an aisle of steel grates marching up the center of the stage and a two-story jungle gym of prison cells running along the back wall. But it also feels oppressive and cavelike, with stalactite-lights hanging low from the ceiling and stalagmite-pipes jutting up from the floor. "If I'd had the money," says Hoover, "I'd have done a ring of opaque, barred windows around the rim of the theater, just to make the audience feel more trapped." He sighs. He's a short man with ruddy cheeks and tousled reddish hair, much more naiad than Sade. Instead, he says, he's had to settle for a more modest alteration: substituting a few chairs in the audience for gray steel benches. Padded, of course—these are $65 seats after all. He tests one out and smiles. "Nice and comfortable."

JENNIFER SENIOR

Photograph by Donald Cooper.



Opening Old Times

They're reviving an old Harold Pinter play. There were inmates . . . a Christmas party . . . a baby. I remember someone. Holding a baby. *The Hothouse* opens February 25 at the Atlantic Theater.

Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane. (420-8000).

The Mystery of Irma Vep—The late Charles Ludlam's penny-dreadful vehicle for himself, Everett Quinton, and a glistening mound of wigs. It was a loopy sensation in 1984; Quinton returns for this repeat engagement with Stephen DeRosa. $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Westside Theater, 407 W. 43rd St. (239-6200).*

Oh, Coward!—Oh, the potential! A musical revue based on the life and works of Noël Coward. $30–$35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3. Through 3/14. *Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. (727-2737).*

Over the River and Through the Woods—A new comedy from Joe DiPietro about the efforts of four Italian-American grandparents to change the life of their grandson. $45. Mon., Tues., Fri., and Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

Oy!—A new comedy by Rich Orloff showing the effects of Yiddish words on contemporary life. With original music by Greg Pliska and a live klezmer duo. Presented by Melting Pot Theatre. $35. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Theater 3, 311 W. 43rd St. (279-4200).*

Paradise Hotel—The latest from Richard Foreman, this time about a group of paranoid sexual adventurers who converge in their quest for Nirvana and fine lodging. $15. Tues. and Thurs.–Sun. at 8. Through 4/19. *Ontological Theatre at St. Mark's Church, 131 E. 10th St. (533-4650).*

Perfect Crime—Warren Manzi's long-running thriller about a wealthy psychiatrist accused of murdering her husband, and the small-town detective who tries to prove she committed the "perfect crime." $35. Mon. and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7, Wed. and Sat. at 2. *Duffy Theatre, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. (695-3401).*

Rollin' on the T.O.B.A.—A songful tribute to the last days of black vaudeville, when African Americans toured the 80-house circuit with their white brethren but were often denied pay and lodging. Conceived and written by Ronald "Smokey" Stevens and Jaye Stewart. $38.50–$42.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 3. *47th Street Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. (239-6200).*

Secrets Every Smart Traveler Should Know—There is a decent amount of merriment to be had from this revue. Inspired—or incited—by a homonymous travel guide, this show by a number of hands pokes fun at every aspect of travel, from the hopeless phone calls for airline reservations to the joys of sandy Uzbekistan. Even the Cathtilian lithp geth a tuneful thong tribute. (Simon: 12/15/97.) $20–$47.50; optional dinner one hour before curtain. Mon., Wed., Thurs., and Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2:30 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened 10/30/97. *Ibis Theatre, 321 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

Stomp—As the title implies, an energetic show in which a troupe of performers dances, claps, and generally bangs on everything in sight. Featuring buckets, trash-can lids, and, yes, the kitchen sink. $24.50–$49.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 2/27/94. *Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., bet. 7th and 8th Sts. (477-2477).*

The Misanthrope—Uma Thurman plays a pretty yet dim American starlet in this Molière comedy, which translator Martin Crimp has wisely re-set in contemporary London. Roger Rees also stars; directed by Barry Edelstein. $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3. *Classic Stage Company, 136 E. 13th St. (239-6200).*

This Is Our Youth—Kenneth Lonergan's play is one that young people will adore and their elders embrace. It concerns smooth Dennis, a school dropout and drug dealer; his friend the dopey and klutzy Warren Straub, who shows up with a suitcase full of his prized possessions plus fifteen grand he swiped from his remarried old man; and Jessica Goldman, a stylish and mildly promiscuous design student. A world is conjured up—a world observed with spine-tingling accuracy and scalpel-like penetration. Mark Ruffalo is the perfect Warren. Missy Yager is a gem of a Jessica. Mark Brokaw's direction remains exemplary. When the comedy turns serious, the transition is flawless and shattering. (Simon: 11/16/98.) $40. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Douglas Fairbanks Theatre, 432 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding—A wedding at *St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St.*, then a reception at *Vinnie Black's Vegas Room, Hotel Edison, 221 W. 46th St.*, with Italian buffet, champagne, and wedding cake. Wonderfully tacky—and it's lasted longer than a lot of real marriages. $65–$75. Thurs.–Sat. at 7, Sun. at 2. Opened: 2/6/88. *(239-6200).*

Wit—Can a play be made out of the last hours of a professor of literature dying of ovarian cancer? A play that hinges on a close reading of Donne's *Holy Sonnets*? That, without slighting its seriousness, sees the comedy in dying? No? Think again: Margaret Edson, with her firstling effort, has managed it, and more. It is a dazzling and humane play you will remember till your dying day, and especially then, thanks also to a near-flawless production. First, Kathleen Chalfant, a Vivian Bearing of power and vulnerability, commanding intelligence and compelling irony. For this play alone, Edson should be handed the Harvard English department. (Simon: 9/28/98.) $35–$49.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8; Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 3. *Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. (307-4100).*

Off-Off Broadway

Admissions—This new play, about a hostile student takeover of the university president's office, inaugurates the brand-new Blue Heron Arts Center in Gramercy. Austin Pendleton directs. $15. Fri. and Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 3/28. *Blue Heron Theatre, 121 E. 24th St. (332-0027).*

Bravo, NY!—A comedy about a prominent catering outfit of the same name, which for one night must supply food and friendly service for a bogus ceremony cooked up by a loveless financier to boost his public image. $20. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. Through 2/28. *Samuel Beckett Theatre, 412 W. 42nd St. (673-3852).*

Caesar and Cleopatra—George Bernard Shaw's depiction of Caesar as a devious and egocentric man. Performed by the Jean Cocteau Rep. $24–$30. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. *Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery (677-0060).*

Cleveland—Mac Wellman's 1986 play about suburbia, intergalactic warfare, and the prom. Presented by the Bat Theater Co. $10. Fri. and Sat. at 10. Through 3/13. *The Flea, 41 White St. (226-0051).*

Desperelics—Alexander Lyras tears through the roles of eight overaccomplished or despairing urban types, all slouching at various rates toward the new millennium. $15. Fri. and Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7. *Gene Frankel Theater, 24 Bond St. (505-0099).*

The Ed Bullins Retrospective—An evening of three one-act plays by the renowned playwright. $8–$25. Thurs.–Sun. at 7:30. Through 2/28. *Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, 515 Lenox Ave. (491-2200).*

Human Resources—The newest solo show from Richard Hoehler, the guy behind *Working Class*. Here he plays five men struggling for survival in New York City. $25. Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 5. Through 2/28. *Kaufman Theater, 534 W. 42nd St. (279-4200).*

Jodie's Body—Aviva Jane Carlin's acclaimed one-woman show about art, femininity, and South African politics. $35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 8, Sun. at 2. *Arc Light Theatre, 152 W. 71st St. (595-0355).*

Light Up the Sky—The Moss Hart renaissance continues apace with his 1948 backstage musical about the perils of opening out of town. $15. Thurs. and Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. Through 3/7. *St. Bart's Playhouse, 109 E. 50th St. (378-0219).*

Monday Night Magic—Internationally known magicians munch on glass, puncture flailing assistants with swords, yank rabbits from hats, etc., all in an intimate setting. $20–$27.50. Mon. at 8. *Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St. (307-4100).*

Night of 1,000 Heels—A new all-gal musical comedy in the spirit of the High Heeled Women revues. Written by Cassandra Danz, Mary Fulham, and Warren Leight, author of *Side Man*. $15. Thurs.–Sat. at 10, Sun. at 5. Through 3/14. *La Ma-Ma E.T.C., 74A E. 4th St. (475-7710).*

Nothin' but the Blues—A songful four-character play celebrating the black music of the twenties, thirties, and forties. $12. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3:30 and 8. Through 2/28. *La MaMa E.T.C., 74A E. 4th St. (475-7710).*

Richard II—Presented by Expanded Arts, the inspired company that did *R & J*. $12. Thurs.–Sun. at 7. Through 2/28. *Fairbanks Studio Theatre, 432 W. 42nd St. (501-2066).*

Running Man—The second collaboration between jazz composer Diedre Murray and Pulitzer finalist Cornelius Eady, which again examines the contemporary African-American family. $20. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 4 and 8, Sun. at 6. *HERE, 145 Sixth Ave. (647-0202).*

The Seagull—As interpreted by Target Margin Theater, which seldom interprets anything predictably. $12–$15. Tues.–Sat. at 8. Through 3/20. *Ohio Theatre, 66 Wooster St. (358-3657).*

Symphonie Fantastique—Puppeteer Basil Twist dances his fabulous creations around a 500-gallon tank. $25. Tues.–Fri. at 7, Sat. at 2 and 10:30, Sun. at 5. *HERE, 145 Sixth Ave.. (647-0202).*

Things Fall Apart—An adaptation of the 1958 novel about English imperialism in Nigeria. $20–$25. Fri. and Sat. at 7, Sun. at 3. Through 2/28. *Aaron Davis Hall, Convent Ave. at 135th St. (650-7418).*

Tokyo Can Can 2—A musical based on playwright-director Yutaka Okada's experiences as a young boy growing up in post-war Japan. $30. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3. *American Theatre of Actors, 314 W. 54th St. (307-4100).*

2½ Jews—A comedy about a prominent civil-rights attorney's relationships with his irascible father and lawyer son. By Alan Brandt. $32.50. Wed. at 3 and 8:30, Sat. at 5 and 8:30, Sun. at 2. *Raymond J. Greenwald Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. (239-6200).*

Umbrage—A new Steven Sater play about the fraught friendship between an aging immigrant factory worker and a struggling musician. With original music by Duncan Sheik. $12. Thurs.–Sun. at 8. Through 2/28. *HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., at Dominick St. (647-0202).*

You Shouldn't Have Told—Anne Thompson-Stretching's long-running drama about what happens to an African-American family when the daughters reveal that they have been sexually molested by their mother's boyfriend. $30. Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3. *Chernuchin Theatre, 314 W. 54th St. (279-4200).*

Photograph by Carol Rosegg.

art

Malcolm Morley...David Nyzio...Silk Rarities

Galleries

Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Jennifer Bartlett—A new series of pastels depicting Arizona mountains at different times of day; through 3/13. Gray, 1018 Madison Ave. (472-8787).

Ray Johnson—A selection of collages from the artist's estate in conjunction with the retrospective of his work currently on display at the Whitney Museum of American Art.; through 3/27. At Feigen, 49 E. 68th St. (628-0700) and Feigen Contemporary, 535 W. 20th St. (929-0500).

Tom Leaver—Landscape paintings whose surfaces emphasize the processes through which they were made, among them the artist's use of his hands to apply paint to canvas; 2/25–3/27. Graham, 1014 Madison Ave. (535-5767).

Robert Andrew Parker—Drawings and watercolors that chronicle the artist's trips around the world; through 3/13. Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St. (838-0333).

Paul Rotterdam—A painting inspired by the artist's nightly observation of the Hale-Bopp Comet, and drawings and paintings based on his continuing studies of nature; through 3/20. Cadé, 1045 Madison Ave. (734-3670).

Don Van Vliet—Recent works on paper; through 3/26. Werner, 21 E. 67th St. (988-1623).

Beatrice Wood—A survey of drawings, watercolors, and lithographs organized by Francis M. Naumann, a Dada scholar who has written extensively about the artist; 3/3–4/10. Moeller, 167 E. 73rd St. (988-4500).

57th Street Area

Richard Diebenkorn—Paintings and works on paper from the artist's "Ocean Park" series; Through 3/20. Rubin Greenberg Van Doren, 730 Fifth Ave. (445-0444).

Marsden Hartley—The first-ever exhibition devoted exclusively to the lithographs made by the American artist while he was living in Berlin in 1923; through 4/9. Babcock, 724 Fifth Ave. (767-1852).

Tom Judd—Paintings that were inspired by the artist's recent journey down the Salmon River in Northern Idaho and continue his juxtapositions of materials and images from nature; through 3/20. Associated American Artists, 20 W. 57th St. (399-5510).

Lee Krasner—Paintings from the late forties through the early sixties; through 3/13. Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (980-5454).

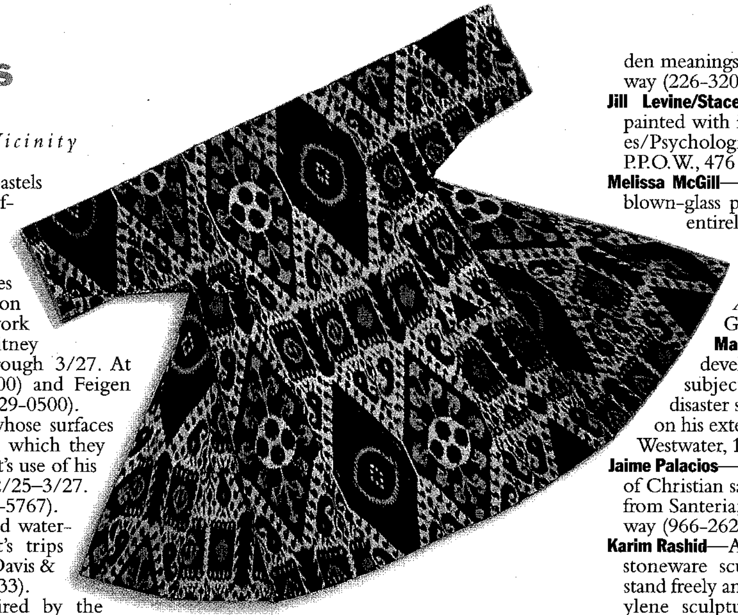
Elizabeth Murray—New paintings that continue the artist's exploration of familiar images; through 3/13. PaceWildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. (421-3292).

Robert Natkin—Recent abstract paintings; 2/26–4/17. Reece, 24 W. 57th St. (333-5830).

Dennis Oppenheim—Recent sculpture, video, and documentation of large-scale outdoor projects from 1996 to the present; 2/25–3/27. Helman, 20 W. 57th St. (245-2888).

Ground Rules:

Galleries are generally open Tues. through Sat., from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6.



Retrospective **Drawn from the largest privately assembled group of nineteenth-century ikats, the silk wall hangings, mounted panels, and robes in "Ikat: Splendid Silks of Central Asia From the Guido Goldman Collection" were laboriously dyed and woven by master craftsmen of Bukhara and Samarkand. At the Jewish Museum, 1109 Fifth Avenue, at 92nd Street; through May 16.**

Stuart Shills—Recent landscape paintings executed on site in Ireland, Philadelphia, and Indiana; through 3/13. De Nagy, 724 Fifth Ave. (262-5050).

Tom Wesselman—A survey of paintings, collages, sculptural models, and gouaches made between 1960 and 1998; through 3/20. Davidson, 41 E. 57th St. (759-7555).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Barbara Bloom—*The French Diplomat's Office*, an installation of the artist's three-dimensional interpretation of a watercolor that appears to depict an interior decorator's rendering of an office; 2/27–4/30. Blum, 99 Wooster St. (343-0441).

John Bock—An installation of costumes, objects, and props derived from an action performed by the artist; through 3/27. Kern, 558 Broadway (965-1706).

Scott Borofsky—New oil paintings and works on paper on the theme of the Raft of the Medusa; through 3/13. Donahue/Sosinski, 560 Broadway (226-1111).

Romolo Del Deo/Lisa Breslow—Bronze sculptures of fragmented body parts/Intimately scaled landscape paintings. Through 3/13. Bridgewater/Lustberg, 560 Broadway (941-6355).

Roy Dowell—Recent large-scale paintings and collages on paper, whose painted passages, picture fragments, and combinations of letters hint at hidden meanings; through 3/13. Marcus, 578 Broadway (226-3200).

Jill Levine/Stacey Davidson—Mixed-media works painted with images of Indian gods and goddesses/Psychological portraits. Through 3/13. P.P.O.W., 476 Broome St. (941-8642).

Melissa McGill—An installation of small, mirrored, blown-glass pieces, a series of portraits sculpted entirely from lint, and a sound installation using conch shells, pedestals, and the recorded voice of Anna Magnani taken from Rossellini's film, *Amore*; through 3/13. CRG, 93 Grand St. (966-4360).

Malcolm Morley—New paintings that develop the artist's characteristic range of subject matter—ships, vintage airplanes, disaster scenes at sea—and continue to draw on his extensive travels; through 3/20. Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St. (431-3685).

Jaime Palacios—New paintings that combine images of Christian saints, African divinities, and symbols from Santeria; 2/25–3/27. Knowlton, 568 Broadway (966-2625).

Karim Rashid—A limited edition of ceramic slip-cast stoneware sculptures designed to interlock or stand freely and organic vacuum-molded polyethylene sculptures that also function as chairs; through 3/20. Gering, 476 Broome St. (226-8195).

Thomas Rose—Constructed objects, such as a mailbox or a house, that suggest the physical manifestation of a memory; through 3/20. Steinbaum Krauss, 132 Greene St. (431-4224).

Glen Rubsamen—Oil-on-panel paintings of Euro Disney in a neoclassical style; 2/26–4/3. Inglett, 100 Wooster St. (343-0573).

Chelsea

Cristian Alexa—Photographs and slides documenting the artist's unannounced actions for an unsuspecting audience at various locations in New York City; through 3/13. Martz, 529 W. 20th St. (206-3686).

Rose Almeida/Barbara Kasten—Drawings on paper, photography, and wall works/Recent photographs of male and female nudes wearing primitive Mexican masks. Through 3/13. Weber, 529 W. 20th St. (691-5711).

Jaime Arredondo—Paintings depicting a single large flower as a central image; through 3/20. Billis, 526 W. 26th St. (645-2621).

Asymptote—New work by the architectural team Rashid + Couture; through 3/20. Urbach, 526 W. 26th St. (627-0974).

Donald Baechler—New large-scale collage paintings made up of faces retrieved from throwaway doodles, commercial packaging, and third-world signage; through 3/27. Cheim & Read, 521 W. 23rd St. (242-7727).

Jean-Marc Bustamante—Large-scale gestural abstract drawings silk-screened on Plexiglas; through 3/20. Marks, 523 W. 24th St. (242-0200).

Bart Domburg/Jitka Hanzlová—Painted portraits that focus on the act of looking and being looked at/Photographs documenting the Czech artist's hometown. Through 3/20. Gasser & Grunert, 524 W. 19th St. (807-9494).

Peter Fischli and David Weiss—Three slide shows made up of hundreds of the artists' recent photographs of flowers; through 3/20. Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. (243-0200).

Zhang Huan—Recent photographs and video by a

Photograph by Don Tuttle, courtesy of The American Foundation for Textile Art, Inc.

Chinese performance artist; through 3/27. Protetch, 511 W. 22nd St. (633-6999).

Pamela Earnshaw Kelly/John Eric Byers—Raku-fired ceramic animal sculptures/Carved and painted furniture. Through 4/9. Elder, 529 W. 20th St. (462-2600).

Karen Kilimnik—New paintings and photographs that present likenesses of the artist in the guise of real and imagined characters; through 3/20. 303, 525 W. 22nd St. (255-1121).

Arthur Mednick/Venske and Spanle—Sculptures of welded concentric layers of steel that suggest prehistoric tools/White marble sculptures that spire vertically from the floor or assume a liquidlike, dripping form, by two German artists. Through 3/13. Thatcher, 529 W. 20th St. (675-0222).

Donna Moylan/Elaine Reichek—Recent paintings in which narrative is layered over abstraction; through 3/27/A video and new video stills from a larger body of work, When This You See..., which is a compilation of clips from films from the twenties to the nineties that show women sewing; through 3/27. Klagsbrun, 526 W. 26th St. (243-3335).

Marc Mulders/Julia Kunin—Expressionistic still-life paintings of flowers and wild game/Biomorphic sculptures incorporating red suede. Through 3/20. Stux, 529 W. 20th St. (352-1600).

David Nyzio/Ken Feingold—A series of works titled "Bacteria Rules," in which images are created by suspending a photographic negative above a piece of paper or glass immersed in a shallow pool of water containing algae cultures/An interactive computer-image and sound installation originally commissioned by the InterCommunication Center, Tokyo, for the ICC Biennale '97. Through 3/13. Postmasters, 459 W. 19th St. (727-3323).

Antonio Petracca—Paintings whose images suggest a fragment of a larger view; through 3/20. Foster, 529 W. 20th St. (229-0044).

Liliana Porter—Recent photographs, works on canvas, and a video; through 3/18. Nosei, 530 W. 22nd St. (741-8695).

Joyce Scott—Sculptures that incorporate beadwork and address issues of race, identity, and history; through 3/13. Anderson, 453 W. 17th St. (463-0970).

Jim Shaw—New paintings, sculptures, drawings, and photographs that document the artist's dreams; 2/27–3/27. Metro Pictures, 519 W. 24th St. (206-7100).

Claude Simard—New sculpture and photographs that continue the artist's investigation of colonial identity; through 3/13. Shainman, 513 W. 20th St. (645-1701).

Paul Thek—Drawings made between 1966 and 1988, most of which are being shown in New York for the first time, and works on newspaper, self-portraits, landscape drawings; through 3/13. Alexander and Bonin, 132 Tenth Ave. (367-7474).

Group Shows

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Bookstein—50 E. 78th St. (439-9605). A selection of paintings by Blaine, Matter, Matthiasdottir, Tabachnick, Trieff, and other artists who studied under Hans Hofmann; through 4/9.

Feigen—49 E. 68th St. (628-0700). "Strange Beauty: A Century of Mannerism, 1520–1620," with Mannerist paintings by Italian and Netherlandish artists; through 4/2.

Wildenstein—19 E. 64th St. (879-0500). "French Master Drawings From the 16th Through the 18th Centuries," with works by Boucher, Fragonard, Greuze, Watteau, others; through 5/1.

57th Street Area

Equitable—787 Seventh Ave. (554-4818), Mon.–Fri. 11–6, Sat. 12–5. "Reflections in a Looking Glass: A Lewis Carroll Centenary Exhibition," an overview of photographs, manuscripts, and drawings by the Victorian writer and artist; through 4/24.

Marlborough—40 W. 57th St. (541-4900). Drawings by Motherwell, early works by Reinhardt, and sculptures by Rosati; through 3/13.

YWCA—610 Lexington Ave. at 53rd St. (735-9731). "Paper Cuts," an exhibition of cut-paper works by Brackman, Coron, Guest, Obrosey, Twitchell, Xinhua, and others from around the world; through 3/16.

SoHo and TriBeCa

Apex Art —291 Church St. (431-5270). "Actual Size," an exhibit comprised mostly of works on paper by Carroll, Fasnacht, Jones, Madsen, and Quaytrn; through 3/13.

Art in General—79 Walker St. (219-0473). "Spaceship Earth," humorous, absurd, and ironic works by twenty artists, including Blanchon, Keating, Lucas, Magnotta, Probst, Tugar, others; through 4/3.

Dorsky—379 W. Broadway (966-6170). "Om," an exhibition of meditative works by Bowen, Christensen, Highstein, Means, Shechet, Westfall, others; through 4/6.

Exit Art—548 Broadway (966-7745). "Paradise 8," a curatorial experiment in which eight curators will merge initially discrete exhibition zones of works by various artists within the gallery space over a period of three months; through 4/3.

Chelsea

Art Resources Transfer—An installation by Michael McMillen and works by Linhares and Walt; through 3/14. Art Resources Transfer, 210 Eleventh Ave. (691-5956).

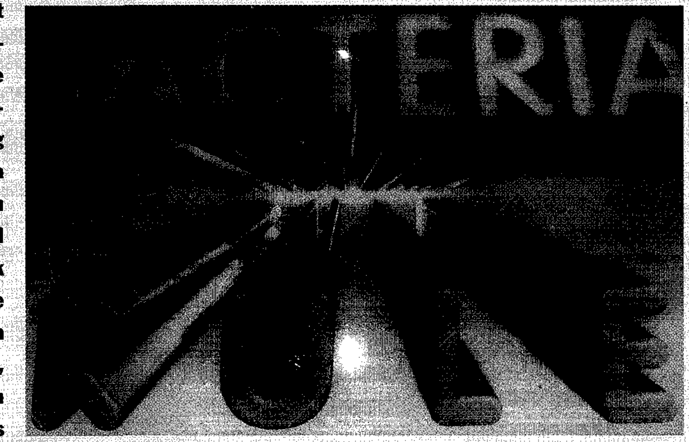
Bravin + Lee—526 W. 26th St. (352-8374). Works by Dunham, Noble, Oates, Saul; through 3/13.

Cooper—534 W. 21st St. (255-1105). "Wall Works," a collaborative project by dozens of well-known artists, including Grünfeld, Hirst, Judd, LeWitt, Paik, Schnabel, Sherman, Warhol, others; through 3/20.

Golden—529 W. 20th St. (414-8456). "Fiction Reality," photographs and photo-based works that experiment with contemporary narratives by Baum, Carucci, Maul, Moffat, Reisman, others; through 3/13.

Talent Home-Grown

David Nyzio might be best known for the unconventional materials he's used in his art over the past ten years, but it's the sculptures and photographs, not their media (algae, milkweed bugs, moss, and butterfly wings) that have consistently caught attention first. Nyzio's workmanship is so meticulous, in fact, that some people will see his latest show (Postmasters Gallery, 459 West 19th Street; through March 13) and never guess that his green silk-screen-like images on paper (below, *Bacteria Rule*) and glass are made by suspending a photographic negative over a sheet of paper or glass immersed in a pool of water with algae. Or that the shimmering squares of blue, arranged in rows on a board as though painted, are actually punched-out butterfly wings. Nyzio's manipulations conceal processes that are anything but predictable. To create his newest work, an engraving on a steel plate that depicts a sculpture of the *Discus Thrower* in various positions, the artist called the Metropolitan Museum to ask where the nearest version of the sculpture could be found (at a TriBeCa school, it turned out), then photographed it more than 100 times from different heights and distances. He used only seven. No matter. "I wanted to do a piece that would explore the way light reflects off a line engraved in steel," he says. It works, too—when you walk by the piece from left to right, the images appear to be spinning. His algae "photographs" may reflect a two- or five-month growth period, depending on the effects he wants to achieve. Drying out the paper or glass early allows for a more defined image, he says, while a more mature piece will verge on abstraction. Sometimes, even Nyzio's messiest mistakes have produced surprising results. "I did a piece once with agar, a gelatin extracted from red algae, and I dumped the excess on my studio floor," he says. A few weeks later, he noticed that water had evaporated from the pudding-like mass, leaving a hardened amber-colored substance. He began casting agar in different shapes—nuts and bolts and structural components—and assembled them into a coffee-table base. Why not? "I think that most people have a rigid idea of what they want to accomplish and don't realize the possibilities outside a specific goal," he says. "I'm always trying to be aware of the periphery." **Edith Newhall**



Photograph courtesy of Postmasters Gallery.

Other

Rotunda—33 Clinton St., between Cadman Plaza West and Pierrepont St., Brooklyn Heights (718-875-4047), Tues.–Fri. 12–5, Sat. 11–4. "Zone of Risibility," an exhibition of humorous and witty works by Brooklyn artists Awai, Cook, Costigan, Ganjian, Moyer, Mukerjee, Wang, others; through 3/27.

Schomberg Center—515 Malcolm X Boulevard (491-2200). "Black New York Artists of the Twentieth Century," featuring works by 123 artists, includingBBearden, Conwill, Douglas, Lawrence, Ringgold, Woodruff, others; through 3/28.

Photography

Ansel Adams—Photographs by the famous landscape photographer; through 5/1. Carter, 560 Broadway (966-1933).

Bernd and Hilla Becher—New photographs of industrial structures by collaborators who have been working together for almost forty years; through 3/27. Sonnabend, 420 W. Broadway (966-6160).

Brett Weston—Photographs of the Oceano Dunes taken between 1931 and 1969; through 3/27. D2, 851 Madison Ave. (734-5300).

Keith Carter—New black-and-white photographs by the Texas-born photographer known for square silver-tone prints that highlight crisply focused everyday subjects against an atmospheric background blur; through 3/13. Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. (334-0010).

Jed Devine—New and previously unseen palladium prints; through 3/27. Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St. (517-3766).

Lee Friedlander—Fifty-four new photographs, many of street scenes, by the artist most famous for his images of musicians; through 3/20. Borden, 560 Broadway (431-0166).

Frank Herholdt—"The Last Supper," the photographer's controversial revision of da Vinci's fresco, in which decadent women replace reverent apostles, and an emaciated model substitutes for Christ; through 3/20. Great Modern Pictures, 17 W. 24th St. (242-2581).

ICP—1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (768-4682), Tues.–Thurs. 10–5, Fri. 10–8 (voluntary contribution 5–8), Sat. and Sun. 10–6; $6, $4 students and seniors. A photo essay of a Brooklyn teenage gang by Bruce Davidson; through 3/7. . . . "Intimate City: The Photographs of Thomas Roma." Approximately 40 gelatin prints depicting various aspects of New York City life and drawn from five projects that became books, among them *Come Sunday* and *Sunset Park*; through 3/7.

ICP Midtown—1133 Sixth Ave., at 43rd St. (768-4682), Tues.–Thurs. 10–5, Fri. 10–8 (5–8 admission by voluntary contribution), Sat. and Sun. 10–6; $6, $4 students and seniors. "To the Rescue," paintings, sculpture, photography, video and multimedia works by Abakanowicz, Ewald, Osorio, Winters, and four others that reflect the artists' research in the American Joint Distribution Committee's photographic archives; through 3/16.

Lotte Jacobi—Photographs taken in forties and fifties Berlin and New York, including portraits of Chagall, Einstein, Mann, Stieglitz, others; through 3/20. Van Der Donk, 601 W. 26th St. (691-5973).

Edward Keating—Photographs of New York by a New York *Times* staff photographer and ICP faculty member; 2/26–4/3. Leica, 670 Broadway (777-3051).

Steve Lehman—Images of Tibet by a photojournalist whose work has appeared on the front pages of the Washington *Post* and the New York *Times*; through 5/5. Newseum, 580 Madison Ave. (317-7596).

Lon of New York—Male-physique photographs by Alonzo Hanagan, who published under the above alias; through 3/28. Wessel + O'Connor, 242 W. 26th St. (242-8811).

Wendell MacRae—Vintage photographs commemorating the gallery's thirtieth anniversary; 2/24–4/10. Witkin, 415 W. Broadway (925-5510).

Mann—210 Eleventh Ave. (570-1223). "Inside/Outside," in conjunction with Blind Spot magazine's recent issue, an exhibition of photographs including images by Bartscherer, Brouws, Casebere, Tourlentes, Waters, others; through 3/27.

Miller—20 W. 57th St. (397-3930). Recent color photographs by Stéphanie Couturier; "Visage," an exhibition of sixteen portraits by renowned photographers Evans, Abbott, Steichen, others; through 3/27.

Barbara Morgan—Retrospective of a photographer well-known for collaborations with Martha Graham and her experimental photomontages and photograms; through 3/27. Danziger, 851 Madison Ave. (734-5300).

Aaron Rose—New images; through 3/20. Kasmin, 74 Grand St. (219-3219).

Edward Ruscha/Robert Adams—Photographs from the sixties culled from images produced for his various artist's books and a complete set of first-edition artist's books/Eden, a series of photographs from 1968 made in and around an off-ramp truck stop and cafe in Colorado that have recently been published in a limited edition of 1,000 copies. Through 3/6. Roth Horowitz, 160a E. 70th St. (717-9067).

August Sander/Frederic Weber—Cropped color photographs of faces and abstract monochromatic color fields/Portraits of Weimar Germany from the artist's "Citizens of the Twentieth Century." 2/25–3/28. Richardson, 560 Broadway (343-1255).

Gerardo Suter—A survey of works exploring such themes as memory and the persistence of the past, by an Argentinian-born artist who has lived in Mexico since 1970, including black-and-white photographs of landscapes and figures, through 3/21, at the Americas Society, 680 Park Ave. (249-8950), and Throckmorton, 153 E. 61st. St. (223-1059); two large-scale video installations, through 3/20, at the Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St. (879-3500).

Rolf Tietgens—Surrealist photographs executed in the late thirties; through 3/20. De Lellis, 47 E. 68th St. (327-1482).

Ubu—16 E. 78th St. (794-4444). "The Photogram: 1918–1948," a survey of the photographic process featuring works by Lissitzky, Man Ray, Moholy-Nagy, Schad, others; through 3/6.

Annika von Hausswolff—Nine large photographs of domestic interiors; 2/26–4/3. Kaplan, 48 Greene St. (226-6131).

Museums

American Craft Museum—"Rörstrand: Swedish Art Nouveau Porcelain From the Schreiber Collection." A rare collection of porcelain produced by Sweden's Rörstrand factory, Europe's second-oldest operating ceramics firm; through 5/23. . . . "Art and Industry: 20th-Century Porcelain From Sèvres." Recent works in porcelain by 40 international artists, architects, and designers created at the Sèvres factory in France; through 5/2. 40 W. 53rd St. (956-3535); Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 10–6, Thurs. till 8 (pay as you wish 6–8); $5, $2.50 students and seniors.

American Museum of Natural History—"Epidemic! The World of Infectious Disease." Dioramas, three-dimensional models, videos, films, interactive computer systems, and photographs exploring the world of infectious disease; 2/27–9/6. . . . "Papua New Guinea: Arts and Spirits, Photographs From the Middle Sepik River, 1953–54." Color and black-and-white photographs of Papua New Guinea's indigenous species, art, architecture, and people, taken by Museum ornithologist E. Thomas Gilliard during his 1953–54 expedition; through 3/28. Central Park West at 79th St. (769-5100); Sun.–Thurs. 10–5:45, Fri. and Sat. 10–8:45; $8 suggested contribution, $6 students and seniors, $4.50 children.

Asia Society—"Bamboo Masterworks: Japanese Baskets From the Lloyd Cotsen Collection"; through 5/30. 725 Park Ave., at 70th St. (517-ASIA), Tues.–Sat. 11–6, Sun. 12–5, Thurs. 11–8 (6–8 free admission); $4, $2 seniors and students.

Brooklyn Museum of Art—"Lewis Wickes Hine: The Final Years." 110 photographs of New York, only ten of which have been seen by the public, including images documenting the construction of the Empire State Building, the arrival of immigrants at Ellis Island, and workers in mills and factories; through 4/4. . . . "Domestic Transformations: Working in Brooklyn." Wallpaper, carpets, furniture, and ceramic tiles by Brooklyn-based artists Ann Agee, Jean Blackburn, Ron Baron, and Andy Yoder; through 3/14. 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000); Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. 11–6 (museum open until 11 P.M. on the first Saturday of every month), Sun. 11–6; $4, $2 students, $1.50 seniors.

China Institute—"A Literati Life in the Twentieth Century: Wng Fangyu—Artist, Scholar, Connoisseur"; through 6/20. 125 E. 65th St. (744-8181), Mon.–Sat. 10–5, Tues. and Thurs. 10–8, Sun. 1–5; free.

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution—"Graphic Design in the Mechanical Age: Selections From the Merrill C. Berman Collection." More than 200 works by such pioneers of the avant-garde as Lester Beall, A. M. Cassandre, Gustav Klutsis, Alexandr Rodchenko, and Jan Tschichold, including posters, books, one-of-a-kind prototypes, collages, and other ephemera; through 5/23. . . . "Unlimited by Design." An exhibition focusing on products, services, and environments designed to meet the needs of people throughout their lives; through 3/21. 2 E. 91st St. (849-8300), Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 12–5, Tues. 10–9 (free admission 5–9); $5, $3 seniors and students.

Dahesh Museum—"A Victorian Salon: Paintings From the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum, Bournemouth, England." Thirty-five nineteenth-century paintings collected by the British hotelier Merton Russell-Cotes (1835–1921), among them works by Edwin Landseer, Edwin Long, Albert Moore, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti; through 4/17. 601 Fifth Ave., at 49th St. (759-0606), Tues.–Sat. 11–6; free.

Dia Center for the Arts—"Stan Douglas and Douglas Gordon: Double Vision." New site-specific installations by the Canadian artist Stan Douglas and the Scottish artist Douglas Gordon; through 6/13. . . . "Andy Warhol: Shadows." A work that made in 1978 composed of more than 100 silk-screened and hand-painted panels; through 6/13. . . . "Thomas Schütte: Scenewright." Early installations, small-scale modeled figures, proposals for monuments, watercolors, and photographs by the German artist; through 6/13. . . . "Joseph Beuys: Drawings After the Codices Madrid of Leonardo da Vinci, and Sculpture." Works from Dia's permanent collection, including 96 drawings made in response to two sketchbooks by Leonardo da Vinci, and sculptures; through 6/13. . . . "Robert Irwin: *Excursus: Homage to the Square 3*." The second part of a site-specific installation by the California artist; through 6/13. 548 W. 22nd St. (989-5566), Thurs.–Sun. 12–6; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Drawing Center—"Raymond Pettibon." More than 500 drawings from the late seventies to the present and a selection of artist's books, fanzines, and record covers by the Los Angeles-based artist; through 4/10. 35 Wooster St. (219-2166), Tues.–Fri. 10–6, Sat. 11–6; donation suggested.

El Museo del Barrio—"The Art of Jack Delano." Documentary photographs of interiors, people, and landscapes contributed by the artist to the Farm Security Administration during the thirties; through 2/28. . . . "Gods, Spirits, and Legends: Twentieth-Century Art in El Salvador." The first thematic show of paintings from El Salvador in the United States, featuring 40 works by 17 artists born between 1900 and 1960; through 2/28. . . . "Casitas: Gardens of Reclamation." Large-scale photographs of casitas, small structures built by Puerto Rican immigrants in vacant lots and gardens throughout New York City; through 2/28. 1230 Fifth Ave. (831-7272), Wed.–Sun. 11–5; $4, $2 students and seniors.

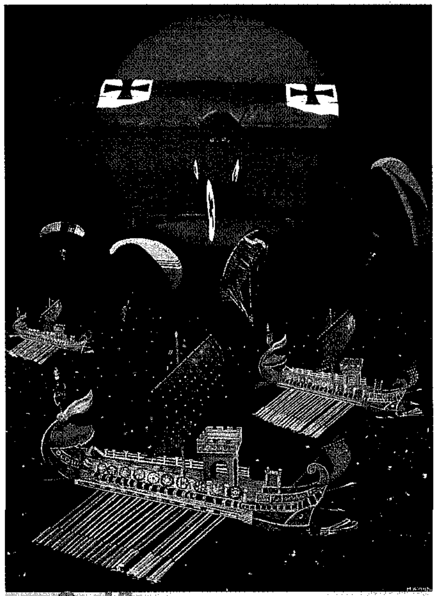
Frick Collection—"French and English Drawings of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries From the National Gallery of Canada." Sixty-seven works by French and English artists, among them Bonnard, Burne-Jones, Constable, Courbet, Hogarth, and Ingres; through 4/25. . . . "Drouais' Portrait of Madame de Pompadour From the National Gallery, London." François-Hubert Drouais's celebrated full-length portrait of Madame de Pompadour; through 4/25. 1 E. 70th St. (288-0700); Tues.–Sat. 10–6, Sun. 1–6; $7, $5 students and seniors; children under 10 not admitted.

Grey Art Gallery—"First Steps II: Emerging Artists From Japan." Recent works in diverse media by seven Japanese artists; through 3/20. New York University, 100 Washington Square East (998-6780), Tues., Thurs., Fri. 11–6, Wed. 11–8, Sat. 11–5; donation suggested.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum—"Picasso and the War Years: 1937–1945." An exhibition of paintings, drawings, sculpture, and prints that explores the Picasso's artistic response to the events leading from the Spanish Civil War through the Nazi occupation of France and the eventual liberation of France by Allied troops; through 5/9. . . . "Jim Dine: Walking Memory, 1959–1969." The first survey of the artist's early paintings and constructions; through 5/16. . . . "Photography: An Expanded View—Recent Acquisitions." Works from the museum's permanent collection by modern masters and contemporary photographers Barth, Casebere, Coolidge, Demand, Eliasson, Jacobson, and others; through 5/16.1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (423-3500); Sun.–Wed. 10–6, Fri. and Sat. 10–8 (Fri. 6–8, pay what you wish), closed Thurs.; $12, $7 seniors and students.

Jewish Museum—"Bar Mitzvah: A Collaboration by David Mamet and Donald Sultan." Drawings and text from the new book, *Bar Mitzvah—Story by David Mamet, Drawings by Donald Sultan* (Bulfinch); through 6/6. . . . "Ikat: Splendid Silks of Central Asia From the Guido Goldman Collection." Rare silk wall hangings, mounted panels, and robes made by master craftsmen in the kingdoms of Bukhara and Samarkand; through 5/16. . . . "Common Man, Mythic Vision: The Paintings of Ben Shahn." The first major museum exhibit of the artist's paintings since 1976, comprising works made by the artist between 1936 and 1965; through 3/7.1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (423-3200); Sun., Mon., Wed., Thurs. 11–5:45, Tues. 11–8 (Tues. after 5 free); $8, $5.50 students and seniors.

Metropolitan Museum of Art—"American Folk Art in the Metropolitan Museum of Art." Paintings, watercolors, drawings, and portrait miniatures by Rufus Hathaway, Edward Hicks, Joshua Johnson, Ammi Phillips, and others working within naive and provincial traditions in the United States during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; 3/2–9/5. . . . "The Practice of Japanese Art: An August and Accomplished Heritage." Buddhist and decorative painting and calligraphy, along with ceramics, lacquers, metalwork, and woodblock prints; 3/2–1/30/2000. . . . "Picasso: Painter and Sculptor in Clay." A survey of the artist's ceramic sculptures; 3/3–6/6. . . . "Late 16th-Century to Early 19th-Century Indian Drawings"; 3/4–7/5. . . . "Masterpieces From the Gilman Paper Company Collection." Approximately 45 important nineteenth-century British, American, and French photographs; 2/26–5/23. . . . "Dosso Dossi, Court Painter in Renaissance Ferrara." Paintings by the sixteenth-century Italian artist, who worked in Ferrara; through 3/28. . . . "Anselm Kiefer: Works on Paper, 1969–1993." A selection of works on paper that offer an overview of the ideas and themes of the first two decades of the German painter's career; through 3/21. . . . "Cubism and Fashion." Cubism-influenced clothing by Madeleine Vionnet, Callot Soeurs, and Gabrielle Chanel, as well as examples of contemporary fashion; through 3/14. . . . "Eighteenth-Century French Drawings in New York Collections." Works on loan from private collections and public institutions in New York City; through 4/25. . . . "Charles Burchfield From the Collection." Watercolors, paintings, and prints created between 1915 and 1963; through 2/28. . . . "Jade in Ancient Costa Rica." Pendants, mace heads, ear ornaments, beads, and other objects carved from jade in Costa Rica between 300 B.C. and A.D. 700; through 2/28. . . . "Clay Into Art: Selections From the Collection of Contemporary Ceramics"; through 5/30. . . . "The Academy of the Sword: Illustrated Fencing Books, 1500–1800." More than 25 rare books accompanied by swords, daggers, shields, and gauntlets from the museum's collection; through 8/30. 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (879-5500); Tues.–Thurs. and Sun. 9:30–5:15, Fri. and Sat. 9:30–9; $8 contribution, $4 children and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (923-3700); Tues.–Sun. 9:30–4:45 (closes at 5:15 between April and September); $8, $4 seniors and students.



On View

War Games

Since de Kooning, few artists have pushed pigment to such delicious effect as Malcolm Morley, whose latest paintings of imaginary marine-disaster scenes are enacted by an exuberant cast of Viking ships, World War I biplanes, and contemporary parasailors. At Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene Street; through March 20.

Museum for African Art—"Landscapes of the Soul: Woman of the African Diaspora—Photographs by Chester Higgins, Jr." Images of African and African-American women taken over the past 30 years; through 3/28. . . . "A Sense of Wonder: African Art From the Faletti Family Collection." A selection of objects from Western, Central, and Eastern Africa dating from the sixteenth to the early twentieth century; through 3/28. 593 Broadway (966-1313), Tues.–Fri. 10:30–5:30, Sat. and Sun. 12–6; $5, $2.50 seniors, students, and children.

Museum of American Folk Art—"Nellie Mae Rowe: Ninety-Nine-and-a-Half Won't Do." The first major retrospective of paintings by the self-taught African-American artist; through 5/2. Lincoln Square (595-9533), Tues.–Sun. 11:30–7:30; free.

Museum of Modern Art—"Pop Impressions Europe/USA: Prints and Multiples From the Museum of Modern Art." Approximately 100 works highlighting printmaking within the Pop aesthetic; through 5/18. . . . "Projects 67— Elaine Reichek: When This You See." Embroidered works that take the format of traditional samplers, but whose aphorisms are culled from art history, literature, science, mythology, and popular culture; through 3/30. . . . "Julia Margaret Cameron's Women." Portraits of women by the nineteenth-century British photographer; through 5/4. . . . "Site Gags: Humor, Satire, and Grotesque in Modern and Contemporary Drawings." Works on paper from the museum's collection, including satirical sketches, grotesques, straight comic illustrations, and visual puns; through 5/4. 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480); Sat.–Tues. 10:30–6, Thurs. 10:30–6, Fri. 10:30–8:30 (4:30–8:30 pay what you wish), closed Wed.; $9.50, $6.50 students and seniors.

Museum of the City of New York—"Washington's New York." Paintings, costumes, maps, furniture, documents, and relics relating to Washington's experiences in New York City as a military commander and political leader; through 7/4. . . . "The Little Apple: Souvenir Buildings From the Collection of Ace Architects." A selection of miniature models of New York buildings created over the past 100 years; through 3/28. . . . "New York Horizontal: Cirkut Camera Views by William Hassler." Thirty rare panoramic views of WWI-era New York; through 5/2. . . . "New York Vertical by Horst Hamman." Photographs that emphasize the verticality of New York's skyscrapers; through 4/18. . . . "New York on the Rise: Architectural Renderings by Hughson Hawley"; through 4/4. . . . "Landscapes of Hope: Rebuilding New York City's Neighborhoods." Photographs by Larry Racioppo documenting the rebuilding of various New York City neighborhoods; through 6/27. 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (534-1672), Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 1–5; suggested contribution $5, $3 students and seniors.

Museum of the Fashion Institute of Technology—"China Chic: East Meets West." An exbition tracing the evolution of Chinese dress and its influence on modern western fashion; through 4/24. . . . "Shoes: A Lexicon of Style." More than 100 pairs of women's shoes, among them twenties pumps by André Perugia, fifties stilettos by Roger Vivier, and seventies platform sandals by Charles Jourdan; through 4/17. Seventh Ave. at 27th St. (217-7642), Tues.–Fri. 12–8, Sat. 10–5; free.

National Academy of Design and School of Fine Arts—"Treasures Revealed: Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century American Works on Paper From the Collection of the National Academy." Drawings, prints, watercolors, and pastels by Kenyon Cox, Thomas Moran, Paul Landacre, William Trost Richards, and others; through 3/7. 1083 Fifth Ave., at 89th St. (369-4880), Wed., Thurs., Sat., Sun. 12–5, Fri. 10–6; $8, $5 seniors and students.

New Museum of Contemporary Art—"Fever: The Art of David Wojnarowicz." The first retrospective of the work of the East Village artist who died of AIDS in 1992; through 6/20. . . . "Anaida Hernandez: Juegos Ilegales/Illegal Games." Large-scale casino-like games created with interactive installations, paintings, and objects; through 4/11. 583 Broadway (219-1222), Wed. and Sun. 12–6, Thurs., Fri., and Sat. 12–8, (free Thurs. 6–8); $5, $3 students, artists, and seniors, free for youths 18 and under.

New York Public Library—"What Goes Up Must Come Down: Order and Disorder: Architectural Transitions in Prints and Photographs." Prints depicting the life cycles of built structures, drawn from the library's Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Divison of Art, Prints, and Photographs; through 4/3. . . . *"In thy map securely saile"*: Maps, Atlases, Charts, and Globes From the Lawrence H. Slaughter Collection, Map Division." Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century works that were donated to the library's Map Division in 1997 by the estate of Lawrence H. Slaughter; through 3/20. . . . Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. (869-8089); Mon. 10–6, Tues.–Wed. 11–6, Thurs.–Sat. 10–6; free.

New-York Historical Society—"New York's Finest: A History of the New York City Police Department." Photographs, newspapers, weapons, uniforms, and crime detection equipment; through 3/21. . . . "Secrets of a Beautiful Face: Beauty Product Advertisements From the Collection of the New-York Historical Society"; through 4/11. 2 W. 77th St. (873-3400); Tues.–Sun. 11–5; $5, $3 seniors and children.

P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center—"Ronald Bladen: Selected Works." A survey of the minimalist's large-

Photograph courtesy of Sperone Westwater.

scale sculpture, models, and drawings; through 4/3. . . . "1999: P.S. 1 Studio Program Exhibition"; through 4/3. . . . "Primarily Structural: A Selection of of Minimalist and Post-Minimalist Works on Paper." Works by Carl Andre, Jene Highstein, Patrick Ireland, Jackie Winsor, and others; through 4/3. . . . "Criss Cross: Some Young New Yorkers III"; through 4/3. . . . "The Game Room: A Tribute to Gino De Dominicis." A painting and several conceptual works together with a gambling table for the use of museum visitors; through 4/3. 22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave. (718-784-2084), Wed.–Sun. 12–6; $5 suggested donation.

Pierpont Morgan Library—"The Wormsley Library: A Personal Selection by Sir Paul Getty, K. B. E." Illuminated manuscripts, fine printed books, historic bookbindings, and other works from the Wormsley Library in England; through 5/2. . . . "Master Drawings Recently Acquired"; through 5/6. . . . "Poe: The Ardent Imagination." A selection of letters, manuscripts, and rare printed editions; through 5/9. . . . "Detectives, Private Eyes, and Spies." Early editions of works by Ambler, Childers, Poe, and others; through 5/5. 29 E. 36th St. (685-0008), Tues.–Thurs. 10:30–5, Fri. 10–8, Sat. 10:30–6; Sun. 12–6; $7; $5 students and seniors.

Queens Museum of Art—"Life Cycles: The Charles E. Burchfield Collection." A selection of of the artist's watercolors, works on paper, lithographs, and paintings from the Burchfield-Penney Center in Buffalo; through 3/21. . . . "Before the Lens: Images of the Imagemakers From the Charles Schwartz Collection." Photographs of Louis-Jacques Mandé Daguerre, Nadar, William Henry Fox Talbot, and other well-known photographers taken by famous and anonymous photographers; through 3/21. New York City Building, Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Queens (718-592-9700), Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 12–5; $3, $1.50 students and seniors.

Studio Museum in Harlem—"From the Studio: Artists in Residence 1997–1998." Works created over the past year by Sheila Batiste, Brett Cook-Dizney, and Julio Valdez during their yearlong tenure with the Studio Museum in Harlem's Art-in-Residence Program; through 2/28. 144 W. 125th St. (864-4500).

Whitney Museum of American Art—"Ray Johnson: Correspondences." Selections from five decades of work by the collagist and mail artist (1927–1995); through 3/21. . . . "Duane Hanson: A Survey of His Work From the 30s to the 90s." A retrospective of works by the sculptor (1925–1996) known for his life-size, realistic renderings of ordinary people; through 2/28. . . . "Gary Hill: Circular Breathing." Five large-scale black-and-white video projections; through 3/21. . . . "Pale Guide to Transparent Things." A related group of photographic works by Seton Smith; through 4/4. 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (570-3676); Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 11–6, Thurs. 1–8 (6–8 pay what you wish); $9, $7 students and seniors (free Thurs. 6–8).

Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris—"The Long Twilight: An Installation by Lynne Yamamoto." An installation that evokes aspects of the life of a young Japanese women who disappeared mysteriously in the thirties by presenting a collection of her personal belongings; through 4/23. 120 Park Ave., at 42nd St. (878-2550), Mon.–Fri. 11–6 (Thurs. till 7:30); free.

Auctions

Christie's—502 Park Ave., at 59th St. (546-1119). Next auction on 3/18.

Doyle—175 E. 87th St. (427-2730). 2/24 at 10: "Fine Furniture, Decorations, and Paintings." On view from 2/20.

Phillips—406 E. 79th St. (570-4830). 2/27 at 10:30: "Fine and Rare Wine."

Sotheby's—1334 York Ave. at 72nd St. (606-7000). 2/25 at 10:15: "Dining Room." On view from 2/20.

Swann Galleries—104 E. 25th St. (254-4710). 2/25 at 10:30: "Photographic Literature and Photographs." On view from 2/21.

Tyre *continued from page 35*

"If the Ostrowskis hadn't taken his passport, he could just swallow his pride and go to the airport and say, 'I'm Chad Ostrowski,' and get on the plane," says Tim Sutfin.

That, the Ostrowskis say, is exactly what they have come to expect from New Beginnings. "He's *not* Chad Ostrowski—and he never was," Anne Marie insists (though the Ostrowskis themselves continue to call him Chad). "Forcing him to assume a false identity took us to hell and back." She wants her son to return to the U.S. as Yong Seong Park.

Chad seems bewildered by these problems, and he expects his mom in Westchester to somehow work them out for him. Despite the challenges of his new life, he says, for the first time the part of him that was unfinished feels complete. "I like spending time with my family," he says. "Especially my sister, who can tell me what life was like before I was taken away."

ANNE MARIE AND JOHN SIT ALONE IN THEIR living room in Westchester, struggling with tears when the talk turns to their lost son. Anne Marie still has the shorts Chad wore the day he arrived, and just looking through the box containing his old primary-school drawings can ruin the day. She figures they spent more than $15,000 on travel costs, lawyers, and translators to reunite Chad with his father. And the bills haven't stopped coming. They send Ki Joon $500 a month to help with expenses. They spend almost $300 a month simply to hear Chad's voice over the telephone. They have been beseeching their elected officials to help their son get a passport so he can come back to the U.S. and attend college. They say they'll pay for that too. More than anything, they want to visit his Korean family again and talk. "I share a child with a Korean man," says Anne Marie, bewildered and amused. "I'm not married to him, and he speaks no English, but we share a child."

Tim Sutfin sympathizes with the Ostrowskis but insists there is little more New Beginnings or Eastern could have done. In 1995, he points out, the Korean government stopped the overseas adoption of older children.

In their darkest moments, Anne Marie and John remind each other of what Chad told them before driving off with Ki Joon to begin life with his rediscovered family.

"I know what you have done for me," the boy told his sobbing mother. "I know what it took for you to bring me here." Then he said the words that Anne Marie and John had walked through fire to hear: "I know that you love me. And I love you." ■

Levine *continued from page 29*

mechanic who kept the Pressman illusion machine from breaking apart at the seams, and he wondered to colleagues why his family never thanked him for it. "Don't they know what I've done for them?" he would complain bitterly.

The final months unfolded in a haze of cement dust and misery. By now it was clear that only superhuman efforts and vast amounts of cash would get the store ready to open on September 8. More than 1,000 workers manned the construction site at the end. They worked virtually around the clock, seven days a week, holidays included. That meant double- and triple-time pay. Ultimately, the lead contractor, Lehrer McGovern Bovis, instructed its workmen simply to ignore the architects, who were still scrambling to incorporate the daily design changes mandated by the Pressmans. A week before the store opened, Liz Pressman informed "her" architect that she had made a small boo-boo: Liz had specified 250 square feet for the size of her baby-clothes department; she really meant 500 square feet. The architect remembers it well: "One week before it's due! And I said it was impossible. But Liz got her way. She called her mother. She called her brother. And all of a sudden, I got orders that within one week I was to have the capacity fabricated that she wanted. We found somebody in Brooklyn and basically said, 'You'll never work for us again if you don't come up with the pieces we need.' They forced us to treat people like crap. But at that point, it was a question of, it's my job, you know?"

The bill for the final three months of construction came to $75 million—$10 million of that in overtime expenses alone. At Lehrer McGovern, one of the larger construction firms in the New York area, no one can remember when one of its clients had even come close to spending so much so fast.

Several hours before the store was to open, Fred Pressman suddenly took it into his head to reverse the direction of all the escalators. He didn't like the way the traffic would flow through the store. Changing the direction of the escalators means a lot more than flipping a switch. For one thing, every UP and DOWN sign throughout the store must be changed, too. It took considerable persuading by several Barneys executives to get Fred to accept the hard fact that the store was finally finished. The Pressmans had built their cathedral.

"At the end of the day, it is still a store," says one of the top architects on the project. "And keep this in mind, too. The Medicis spent their own money." ■

restaurants

Viet Vets...Red-Sauce Revisionism...Celadon

Manhattan

Lower New York

Alison on Dominick—An impeccably turned-out room with blue banquettes and tender lighting. Perfectionist owner Alison Becker Hurt makes sure that all is well. *38 Dominick St., nr. Hudson St. (727-1188). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

American Park—Sophisticated seafood preparations and wonderful water views merit a special trip to the southern tip of Manhattan. In warm weather, outdoor seating is ideal for cocktails and light bites from the raw bar, but even in winter, walls of glass windows remind us that this is a coastal town, after all. Catering available. *Opposite 175 State St., Battery Park (809-5508). (M–E) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Bo Ky—This very basic Chinatown spot has been dishing up delicious noodle soups to the neighborhood since before the Mees and Tang Tangs sprouted uptown. Expect to share a table. *80 Bayard St. (406-2292). (I) ($).*

Can—This elegant SoHo canteen for the hip and the stylish excels in Asian seafood concoctions like hot-pot salmon, South Sea prawns, and seafood paradise, a mélange of lobster, clams, and scallops with a mild black-bean sauce. *482 W. Broadway (533-6333). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Chanterelle—Spare and elegant, virtually religious, this TriBeCa restaurant is a favorite among those who want a Big Deal. Chef David Waltuck runs a grand kitchen—seafood sausage, cold fruit soups, and anything he does with truffles in season. Wife Karen runs the front room with class and warmth. *2 Harrison St., at Hudson St. (966-6960). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

The Cub Room—Fighting back from the scorching bar scene his restaurant became last summer, chef-owner Henry Meer (from Lutèce)—doing penance for the butter and cream of the past—is dishing up contemporary American fare to an impossibly diverse crowd. Yes, that was Ethan Hawke. *131 Sullivan St., at Prince St. (677-4100). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Diva—Another hip spot at the nexus of a hip neighborhood, with Italian specialties like homemade gnocchi and lobster-stuffed black ravioli. Iron candelabras and scarlet walls set the perfect sexy downtown mood. *341 W. Broadway, nr. Broome St. (941-9024). (M) AE, MC, V.*

The Independent—From the minute it opened, this tavernesque TriBeCa duplex has been a favorite of the fashionable neighborhood. The creative American bistro fare includes an acclaimed roasted garlic-lemon chicken with spinach and mashed potatoes, barbecued pork ribs, and lobster cakes served with a sweet corn salad. *179 W. Broadway (219-2010). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Kelley and Ping—The type of funky, lofty noodle house that could only exist—and thrive—in SoHo. *127 Greene St., nr. Prince St. (228-1212). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Layla—A Middle Eastern feast, complete with gyrating belly dancer, brought to you by Drew Nieporent and his TriBeCa production team. Menu highlights include crabmeat phyllo, cinnamon-braised lamb shank with okra, and toasted couscous and almond ice milk. *211 W. Broadway, at Franklin St. (431-0700). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Montrachet—Owner Drew Nieporent now has five places in New York, including Nobu, Layla, Zeppole at the TriBakery, and Tribeca Grill, and another in San Francisco. But this is his baby—attractive, lively, and one of the first truly great restaurants in lower Manhattan. There's lunch on Fridays—try the Roquefort-and-pear salad—and dinner Monday through Saturday. *239 W. Broadway, nr. White St. (219-2777). (E) AE only.*

Nobu—The great Nobu Matsuhisa—actually, he's young, good-looking, and incredibly hip—has arrived in TriBeCa. And New Yorkers haven't tasted Japanese cooking like this—unless, of course, they've visited Matsuhisa's restaurant in L.A. *105 Hudson St. (219-0500). (E) AE, MC, V.*

The Odeon—Downtown has fallen in love all over again with this TriBeCa institution. The bar's out of Dashiell Hammett, and the dining room gets everyone from the banker, his wife, and their 2-year-old to movie stars, artists, and assorted big-deal celebrities. *145 W. Broadway, nr. Thomas St. (233-0507). (M) AE, MC, V.*

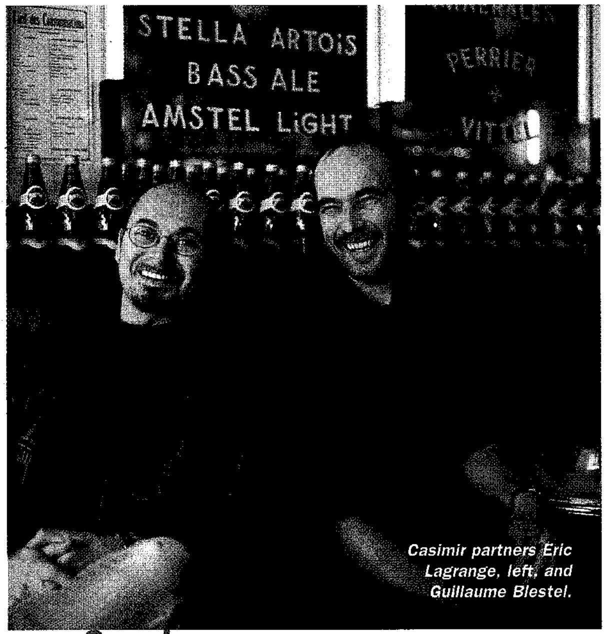
Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *109 Spring St. (274-8883). Also, 240 Columbus Ave., at 71st St. (769-3988). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Pierino—An Italian dining room full of businesspeople and city politicians for lunch and dinner for the bankers on their way uptown offering meta-traditional dishes like lobster and steak. Yes, that was Peter Vallone. *107 Reade St. (513-0610). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Provence—Lots of people have got engaged in the charming garden at this authentic country French restaurant; even more have sampled the bourride, bouillabaisse, and bass flambé. If you can't actually make it to the Côte d'Azur, this is the next best thing. *38 MacDougal St. (475-7500). (M–E) AE.*

Raoul's—The dull roar in this cavelike bistro—aging gracefully amid the high-strung Thoroughbreds of SoHo's restaurant racetrack—is a heartwarming sound. *180 Prince St., nr. Thompson St. (966-3518). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Tennessee Mountain—This 1807 landmark farmhouse serves up huge portions of smoked chicken and grilled ribs, plus regional appetizers and desserts. Bring those breath mints and Handi-Wipes for a $17.95 all-you-can-eat on Monday night. *143 Spring St. (431-3993). (I) AE, MC, TM, V.*



Casimir partners Eric Lagrange, left, and Guillaume Biestel.

Opening

Animal Lovers

Before there was Barney, there was Casimir, the orange dinosaur who captivated a generation of French kids, two of whom—the chef-owner of the Elephant and a former manager from Jules—have grown up to name their new Alphabet City bistro after him. The smallish, affordable menu offers substantial salads (frisée with melted brie and bacon, endive and beef jerky); straightforward entrées (steak-frites, fried cod, pigs' feet, all $13); and appetizer-size "paysan bites," like grilled garlic sausage with potato salad. The "casimir," by the way, isn't a serving of extinct game but an espresso with a dollop of pistachio ice cream. For now, BYOB. (103-105 Avenue B; 358-9683.)

Ground Rules:

Here lie a few hundred of the city's more noteworthy restaurants, some *New York* advertisers among them. The price guide, admittedly imperfect, is as follows: (E) = expensive, $35 and over per place; (M) = moderate, $15–$30 per place; (I) = inexpensive, $15 and under per place.

Following each listing there is also a code indicating acceptable methods of payment: ($) = cash only, AE = American Express, CB = Carte Blanche, DC = Diners Club, DS = Discover, M = MasterCard, TM = Transmedia, V = Visa. "AE only" indicates that American Express is the only accepted charge/credit card.

Photograph by Robert Wright.

Tribeca Grill—Though this spacious, brick-walled restaurant sometimes serves as canteen for the film execs (and movie stars) in offices upstairs, the creative American cuisine and lively bar scene make it a popular downtown destination. Known for its roasted meats and fish specials. *375 Greenwich St., at Franklin St. (941-3900). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Wall Street Kitchen & Bar—As downtown grows more and more residential, its halls of finance, like this former bank building, are being converted into service establishments. This sister of SoHo Kitchen & Bar offers a similarly extensive selection of beers and wines by the glass, plus such eclectic American fare as beer-braised short ribs with egg noodles, and pizza topped with shrimp, smoked bacon, and roasted tomatoes. *70 Broad St. (797-7070). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Windows on the World—Chef Michael Lomonaco, formerly of the '21' Club, has landed at this landmark restaurant known for what may be the most spectacular view of Manhattan Island. His new menu focuses on sophisticated renditions of American food, including skillet-roasted bluepoint oysters with sweet shallot-caviar cream; open raviolo of forest mushrooms, pumpkin, and sage; and Maine lobster with truffles, root vegetables, and buttermilk biscuits. Be sure to take advantage of the restaurant's superlative wine cellar. *1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (524-7000). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Below 14th Street, East

Asti—This 70-year-old Village mainstay epitomizes the concept of the singing waiter. Professional opera singers perform arias and show tunes while waiters manage to carry a tune *and* serve orders of seafood fra diavolo, Maine lobsters, and Black Angus steak. Late-night dining too. *13 E. 12th St. (741-9105). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Gotham Bar & Grill—Alfred Portale's kitchen, with its architectural ingenuity and whimsical creativity, serves as a finishing school for the city's all-star chefs before they launch their own careers. This awesome dining temple has long been a staple. *12 E. 12th St. (620-4020). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Knickerbocker Bar and Grill—A subdued steakhouse with vintage items on the walls—Hirschfelds, copies of the *Saturday Evening Post*, and nineteenth-century curios. A sophisticated combination of gastronomics and history. *33 University Pl., at E. 9th St. (228-8490). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Miracle Grill—One of the earliest pioneers on the East Village dining scene, this comfortable Mexican cantina is especially welcoming in warm weather, when the garden is a serene urban oasis. The grilled-vegetable plate surpasses most. *112 First Ave., nr. 7th St. (254-2353). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Osso Buco—Popular Italian restaurant on a much-traveled Village corridor serving family-style portions of the eponymous house specialty, Caesar salad, fried calamari, and T-bone steak. *88 University Pl., nr. 11th St. (645-4525). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Three of Cups—Proving that the East Village has room enough for another wood-burning oven pizza parlor besides Two Boots. The "mickey," a charred spud dripping with butter, shouldn't be missed. *83 First Ave., at 5th St. (388-0059). (I) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Below 14th Street, West

Andalousia—This relatively undiscovered Village Moroccan rightly prides itself on its roster of tagines and couscous specials. B'stilla is a standout. *28 Cornelia St. (929-3693). (I) MC, V.*

Bar Pitti—This Tuscan trattoria, with tables spilling out onto the sidewalk, has simpler, cheaper food than Da Silvano next door, but it's just as good a spot to sip an espresso and watch the Village foot traffic. Great fettunta. *268 Sixth Ave., nr. Bleecker St. (982-3300). (I–M) ($).*

Da Silvano—Trattoria with tables out front converts this thoroughfare into a people promenade. Great food and views of the local color. Yes, that was Anna Wintour. *260 Sixth Ave., nr. Bleecker St. (982-2343). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Greenwich Cafe—This Village café, with its plush antique wing chairs and rococo mirrors, has a loungy feel and is open around the clock with a menu that crosses every border. Representative items include crab cakes with lobster sauce and fennel tempura, grilled salmon with jasmine rice, and a veggie burger with minted couscous. No cover for the jazz brunch. *75 Greenwich Ave. (255-5489). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Gus' Place—This welcoming Greek taverna in the West Village offers authentic Mediterranean meze and entrées; French doors open out onto warm evenings. The orzo with Gulf shrimp and the lamb-shank stifado are house specialties. *149 Waverly Pl. (645-8511). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Le Zoo—A West Village hot spot, with lots of Left Bank ambience. The menu sticks to standards like poulet grand mère, saumon en croute, and cassoulet. *314 W. 11th St. (620-0393). (M) AE, MC, V.*

One if by Land, Two if by Sea—Elegant Village restaurant situated within an eighteenth-century carriage house previously owned by Aaron Burr. Four fireplaces and nightly piano music enhance a fine menu of American specialties like beef Wellington. *17 Barrow St. (228-0822). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, East Side

Alva—Bare lightbulbs evoke Thomas Edison, the namesake of this sleek spot invented by Charles Palmer and designer Fernando Saralegui, but the food is all very twentieth-century: crispy shrimp cocktail, cod-and-salmon cakes, veal stew, an exciting cheese course. *36 E. 22nd St. (228-4399). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

An American Place—This venerable midtown spot is to New York as Chez Panisse is to Berkeley. With his eclectic American menu, Larry Forgione made the national cuisine interesting again. *2 Park Ave., at 32nd St. (684-2122). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Bolo—There's nothing discreet about Bobby Flay's neo-Spanish cooking. In a room that reminds you of Gaudí by way of Pee-wee Herman, Flay turns out fiery, bold dishes like oven-roasted mushrooms with goat cheese and chili oil as well as paella with curried shellfish and chicken. We *love* the white-peach sangría. *23 E. 22nd St. (228-2200). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Campagna—The *Letterman* crowd is at one table, Time Warner honchos are at another, and isn't that . . . ? Despite the frenzy of having become Media Central, this smart little trattoria serves some of the most satisfying Italian food in Manhattan. Chef Mark Straussman is to thank for dishes like rabbit in polenta, gnocchi with wild mushrooms and truffle oil, and grilled tuna with beets. *24 E. 21st St. (460-0900). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Candela—A soaring space just off Union Square with medieval-theme décor and a contemporary American menu. Seared yellowfin tuna, braised

Happening
Off the Sauce

Tony May has a persecution complex. The dapper restaurateur, whose empire has extended, at various times, throughout the greater metropolitan area, is convinced that his repertoire of refined, pricey *alta cucina* is destined to be overshadowed by the sort of uninspired red sauce that passes for Italian on these shores. "Today," he laments, "most Americans still prefer to go to a trattoria"—code for a *casa* of ill culinary repute, replete with checkered tablecloth and dripping candles—"than to San Domenico," the burnished jewel in his crown. The same wave of turn-of-the-century Southern Italian immigration that introduced Americans to staples like spaghetti and meatballs was also responsible, May bemoans, for the bastardized Italian-American hybrid. "I worked in places where they used to make lasagne on Monday and serve it until Saturday," he shudders. "They'd cook tomato sauce for *eight hours.*" The experience was hideous enough to dissuade May (pictured, standing), who grew up in the Naples suburb of Torre del Greco, from ever showcasing Neapolitan food at any of his restaurants.

Until now. This week, he has invited the owner and chefs from the renowned La Cantinella, a Michelin-starred restaurant in Naples, to cook such authentic specialties as scungilli, or sea snails with tomatoes and oregano; seafood stew with bruschetta; sartù di riso, or baked risotto with chicken-liver ragù; perciatelli pasta with ragout of rabbit; and baked baby goat with roasted potatoes. Note: not a single meatball on the four-course, $60 menu.

Not that there's anything intrinsically wrong with them. It's just that something was lost in immigration translation, according to Arthur Schwartz (pictured, seated), author of the cookbook *Naples at Table,* who'll be giving a seminar to launch the Neapolitan week. "Because the Italians couldn't get good meat," says Schwartz, "they added bread, which made them deliciously light." In the U.S., there was no such shortage, and the featherweight balls promptly became heavyweight sinkers.

This sort of gastronomic devolution infuriates May, who's considering implementing a real Neapolitan menu at Gemelli, his World Trade Center restaurant. "Italy is the least-obese country in the world," he says. His compatriots have to come here to catch up. (240 Central Park South; 265-5959.) **ROBIN RAISFELD**

Photograph by Kenneth Chen.

lamb shank, and the random Asian influence as epitomized by the spicy chicken wontons indicate the chef's range. Light bites and a range of wines can be had at the already-buzzing bar. *116 E. 16th St. (254-1600). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

El Parador Cafe—Very possibly the oldest Mexican restaurant in New York City, this comfortable, dependable establishment is known for its enormous selection of premium tequilas and traditional dishes like mole poblano, carnitas, and duck with cuipotle glaze. *325 E. 34th St. (679-6812). (M) MC, V.*

Gramercy Tavern—As a second act to Danny Meyer's much-loved Union Square Cafe, this Flatiron American standout doesn't disappoint. The main dining room manages to be both impressive and cozy, the service superlative, and Tom Colicchio's food inspired. For lesser appetites and lower budgets, the bar menu in the Tavern Room is equally delicious. Orchestrate your own cheese course and sample the varied selection of wines by the glass. *42 E. 20th St. (477-0777). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

i Trulli—A Southern Italian restaurant that aims to prove that tomato sauce is not crucial for survival, i Trulli succeeds with tasty focaccia, homemade sausage, tripe, and venison. In warm weather, the garden is a perfect midtown escape. *122 E. 27th St. (481-7372). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Les Halles—Even though it hasn't been around forever, this utterly perfect re-creation of a Left Bank bistro seems like it has. This is the place to come for onion soup, steak-frites, celeri rémoulade, crème caramel—that sort of thing. *411 Park Ave. So., bet. 28th and 29th Sts. (679-4111). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Medusa—A lot of thought went into the décor at this new restaurant: The floors and bar are red travertine marble, and decorative ironwork details the sconces and door frames. The au courant Mediterranean menu includes such specialties as poppy-seed-encrusted tuna with lime sauce and rack of lamb with Chianti and grilled golden apples. *239 Park Avenue South, nr. 19th St. (477-1500). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Mesa Grill—Chef Bobby Flay believes in big flavors and big portions: He developed his own signature style, plundering the ingredients of the American Southwest for such mouthwatering creations as roasted-garlic shrimp tamales and ancho-honey-glazed salmon. Loud, stylish, and loads of fun, especially for those partaking of the house drink, a cactus-pear margarita. *102 Fifth Ave., nr. 16th St. (807-7400). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Metronome—One of the biggest in a neighborhood known for cavernous dining. The Deco theme and American kitchen are pleasing. *915 Broadway, at 21st St. (505-7400). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Novitá—A beautiful Flatiron restaurant with upscale, nouvelle Italian. Try, especially, the handmade pastas, which seem to have only beneficial effects on all the fashion types and Elite models who've made this room their home away from home. *102 E. 22nd St. (677-2222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Oyster Bar—When a fire temporarily shuttered this Manhattan landmark, its long-faithful clientele were bereft, unsure of what to do with themselves at lunchtime. The doors have reopened, the vaulted ceilings have been (for the most part) repaired, and the regulars are taking their places at the counter. Famous for its 25 varieties of oysters, extensive wine selection, and comprehensive seafood preparations, the restaurant is a magnet for commuters and tourists alike. *Grand Central Terminal, 42nd St. and Vanderbilt Ave. (490-6650). (M) AE, CB, DS, MC, V.*

Park Bistro—Provençal offerings prepared and served with notable agility in an intimate—sometimes crowded—setting. *414 Park Ave. at 28th St. (689-1360). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Piccolino—A country-style Italian restaurant offering homemade pastas and thin-crust pizzas in a peach stucco duplex. (The building is a century old.) Worth trying are the risotto pescatore, shrimp-pesto pizza, and veal quattroformaggio. *8 E. 36th St. (683-6444). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Union Square Cafe—The careful service, human-scale dining rooms, and peerless California café cuisine make this one of the best restaurants in the city. *21 E. 16th St. (243-4020). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Water Club—This romantic spot overlooking the East River is a favorite for formal affairs, but even your average demanding New York diner would be happy with the American menu and the airy, yacht club–like setting. As to be expected in this nautical environment, there's a heavy emphasis on seafood like lobster and soft-shell crabs, and a massive spread for Sunday brunch. Jackets suggested in the main dining room. *F.D.R. Drive via 23rd St. (683-3333). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, West Side

Ben's Kosher Delicatessen—This casual delicatessen—the Art Deco–ish Manhattan offshoot of a Long Island chain—brings a full roster of pastrami, corned beef, sour pickles, potato latkes, and other highlights of kosher cooking to the garment district. All baking is done on the premises, and for those who hanker for something a little stronger than Dr. Brown's, there's a full bar. *209 W. 38th St. (398-2367). (I) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Bright Food Shop—A Chelsea luncheonette with an innovative, healthy Mexican menu with Asian influences. Excellent desserts and a great selection of Mexican fruit sodas. *216 Eighth Ave., at 21st St. (243-4433). (I–M) ($).*

Bryant Park Grill—This long-awaited restaurant on the edge of the city's prettiest pocket park has been mobbed from day one. Go at an off-hour for Caesar salad, New York steak, soft-shell crabs, and scallion pancakes. *40th St., between Fifth and Sixth Aves. (840-6500). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Caffe Bondí Ristorante—Popular with the photographers who work in the Flatiron district and foodies from all over who fill the garden in warm weather. Specializes in Sicilian dishes like coniglio alla stimparata, pasta con sarde, and cassata Siciliana. Open seven days a week, including weekend brunch. *7 W. 20th St. (691-8136). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Shopping

Stellar Cellar

The beautification of everyone's favorite train station continues with the opening of Grande Harvest Wines, ideally situated for frazzled commuters en route to dinner in the suburbs. Bruce Nevins, who also owns Ridgefield's Hay Day Wine Shop, has filled what used to be a thirties-era theater lobby with French and English antiques and restored the travertine marble dome and the celestial mural below it to provide an elegant, uncluttered home for his inventory, which is particularly strong on Californian and Italian bottlings in the $15–$30 range. (Grand Central Terminal, Main Concourse; 682-5855.)

Da Umberto—Low-key Chelsea façade belies the extraordinary Italian offerings inside. Getting a table is no small task, especially in the evening. This is a Euro–New York crossroads. A mad cacophony of laughter and chatter in Brooklynese and Roman. Don't dress down. *107 W. 17th St. (989-0303). (E) AE only.*

Le Madri—This Chelsea mainstay has long enjoyed a reputation for informality and flavorful Italian fare. The garden is a wonderful warm-weather spot for a light lunch of salad and pasta or a more substantial repast like osso buco with gremolata or risotto with lemon and zucchini. *168 W. 18th St. (727-8022). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

World Yacht—Take an out-of-town visitor to see the sights—all of them—over dinner, which could be a hearty serving of filet mignon or Chilean sea bass, topped off with cheesecake, our city's major contribution to the confectionery world. The luxury yacht boards at six, and sails from seven until ten, during which time you'll dine and dance to the music of a live band. Jacket required. *Pier 81, W. 41st St. and the Hudson River (630-8100). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, East Side

Bice—It's always buzzing at this midtown Italian hot spot, where the fashionable crowd takes a hiatus from air-kissing to partake of dishes like lobster salad with baby vegetables, porcini risotto, and veal chop Milanese. *7 E. 54th St. (688-1999). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Istana—Situated in the lobby of the New York Palace hotel, this Mediterranean newcomer is rightfully proud of its olive bar, the only one, chances are, of its kind. Tapas are ideal cocktail accompaniments; heartier appetites are readily satisfied by paella-style roasted fish, pumpkin ravioli with walnuts, or baby chicken with Tunisian spices. *455 Madison Ave., at 51st St. (303-6032). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Jimmy Sung's—This elegant midtown restaurant serves classic Hunan cuisine and a sampling of dishes from other regions. Private dining rooms are perfect for special occasions, business meetings or mini-banquets. *219 E. 44th St. (682-5678). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Moscow Restaurant & Cabaret—This Russian theme restaurant melds art, food, and entertainment in a three-story celebration of the homeland. Downstairs, folk singers perform in the rustic Cabaret, decorated with the owner's enormous horseshoe collection. Upstairs, massive sculptures and paintings dominate the Gallery Bar and the Russian Room, where diners can partake of house specialties like Siberian pelmeni, chicken Kiev, and blini with Beluga caviar. *137 E. 55th St. (813-1313). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Scarabée—Some of the city's best French-Mediterranean food is being served on a nondescript residential block in Turtle Bay, courtesy of chef Joseph Fortunato (formerly of Layla). Owner Karim El Sherif (formerly of Chelsea Bistro and Bar) compiled the well-chosen, helpfully categorized wine list, with selections that pair well with dishes like truffle-marinated squab, pomegranate-glazed salmon, and, at lunch, a killer braised-lamb sandwich. No matter how full you are, don't skip dessert. *230 E. 51st St. (758-6633). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Shinbashi—After nearly a quarter of a century, this elegant Japanese restaurant is still an oasis in the frenzy of midtown. Owner Fumiko Hosoda offers a traditional menu of tempura, sukiyaki, teriyaki, and sushi, plus an array of chef's specialties. *280 Park Ave., at 48th St. (661-3915). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Tatou—Gilded-plaster satyrs, cherubs,

Photograph by Magdalena Caris.

Opening

Madison Man

Consulting chef Tadashi Ono, late of La Caravelle, is responsible for the underlying Asian influence at Celadon, the first full-scale restaurant from the owner of the proliferating Marché Madison gourmet grocery chain. The expansive, streamlined duplex will remain open throughout the day—for "spa" breakfast (grains, crêpes), lunchtime pasta and sandwiches (roast duck with plum sauce and scallion pancakes, lobster roll with lime-wasabi mayo), tea (finger sandwiches and dim sum), and dinner. Entrées like grilled sirloin with soy-shallot purée, and monkfish in lime-ginger sauce, range from $16 to $27. (1167 Madison Avenue, at 86th Street; 734-7711.)

jazz onstage, and New American cuisine. Executive chef Neal Myers has a flair with meats and creatively prepared seafood, like pepper-crusted tuna with black bean-and-mango sauce, and crab cakes accompanied by cole slaw rolls. *151 E. 50th St. (753-1144). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, West Side

Adrienne—After extensive renovations, the elegant American restaurant in this posh midtown hotel reopens with a new look and a new, sophisticated menu. A few of the more notable entrées include a grilled turbot "chop" with cèpe jus, organic chicken en cocotte with morels and fava beans, and coriander-and-black-pepper-crusted rack of lamb from Jameson Farms. *700 Fifth Ave., at 55th St., in the Peninsula (903-3918). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Barbetta—This elegant theater-district landmark is still owned, incredibly, by its founding family. The elaborate interior provides a peaceful background for regional specialties like fonduta, rabbit alla Piedmontese, and a variety of wild-game dishes. The pretheater prix fixe menu runs $43, and the garden is a summertime oasis. *321 W. 46th St. (246-9171). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Bello—Locals flock here for generous portions of well-priced Northern Italian served in a casually elegant atmosphere. Free parking with dinner after 5 P.M. *863 Ninth Ave., at 56th St. (246-6773). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Ben Benson's Steak House—This rollicking steakhouse has long fed hordes of hungry, beef-eating businessmen and the people who love them. The festive air gets pretty thick by the bar, where cigars prevail, but the dining room is entirely devoted to the consumption of standards like lobsters, crab cakes, veal, and four cuts of steak. Free validated parking available. *123 W. 52nd St. (581-8888). (E) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Bombay Palace—This newly refurbished, elegant Indian restaurant has been serving its refined versions of tandoori lobster, lamb kandhari, and chicken kashmiri to a midtown office crowd for years. Try the excellent selection of Indian breads. *30 W. 52nd St. (541-7777). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Broadway Joe's Steakhouse—Located in a townhouse on Restaurant Row, this steakhouse serves a fourteen-ounce prime rib but also delivers fresh seafood and pasta for the omnivore. Hirschfeld caricatures cover the walls, so come find your NINAs while you dine. Discount dinner parking. Private parties. *315 W. 46th St. (246-6513). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Christer's—Famous for its spectacular selection of salmon, this Scandinavian-inspired restaurant, designed by David Rockwell to resemble a colorful, cozy mountain lodge, is a great choice for contemporary renditions of seafood. Open Sundays. *145 W. 55th St. (974-7224). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Cité—An extravagant French steakhouse, marble and pewter with blazing chandeliers, and a more affordable grill next door. *120 W. 51st St. (956-7100). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Commonwealth Grill & Brewery—This Boston brewery import in Rockefeller Center attracts a riotous after-work crowd for its craft beers. The lunch and dinner menus feature American fare like grilled swordfish over lemon pasta, braised lamb shank, duck breast, and tuna, not to mention the obligatory burger. *35 W. 48th St. (977-2269). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Da Rosina—A convenient pretheater location, specializing in homemade pasta and other casual Italian fare, like baked polenta marinara and veal scallopine. Try the $19.98 prix fixe dinner or the $12.95 lunch. *342 W. 46th St. (977-7373). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

"44"—Still the first stop for the officers of the Condé Nast empire. Deeply plush, windowless décor feels like the center of the Earth. Given the theatricality, surprisingly terrific food. *44 W. 44th St., in the Royalton (944-8844). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Johnnie's—This small, old-world Italian restaurant has been a midtown fixture for over three and a half decades. The menu runs the gamut from basic pastas to chicken, veal, and seafood dishes; the $14.95 dinner special is a particularly good deal. *135 W. 45th St. (869-5565). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Julian's—This casual Mediterranean restaurant doesn't get as frenetic as its sister establishment next door, but it still qualifies as a fun place to dine in Hell's Kitchen. The menu offers grilled swordfish, sautéed chicken breasts with grapes and pine nuts, and a range of Sicilian and Southern Italian specialties. *802 Ninth Ave. (262-4288). (I–M) AE, DS.*

La Veranda—Northern Italian food. A popular spot in the theater district offering generous portions of fish, seafood, veal chops, and pasta. Italian brunch available Saturday and Sunday, $15.95 prix fixe. Free parking (with dinner) from 5 to 11 P.M. *163 W. 47th St. (391-0905). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Le Bernardin—French-born Eric Ripert carries forth the quest of his predecessor, the late Gilbert Le Coze, for the world's most spectacular seafood. His ambitious signature dishes—scallops and foie gras with truffles, Spanish-style mackerel in Jerez vinegar, saddle of monkfish—have already won a very loyal following. *155 W. 51st St. (489-1515). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Les Pyrenées—French Provençal cuisine. Cassoulet from Toulouse recommended, as well as filet mignon and frogs' legs. A rustic atmosphere. A lot of theatergoers. *251 W. 51st St. (246-0044). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Mars 2112—Theme restaurants go intergalactic at this big-budget newcomer, which transports diners to the red planet via space shuttle. The food—applewood-smoked pork chops, lobster-mango sushi, smoked-duck quesadillas—will be, for the most part, familiar to earthlings. *1633 Broadway, at 51st St. (582-2112). (I–M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

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THE SALVATION ARMY
SHARING IS CARING

Photograph by Magdalena Caris.

Osteria al Doge—Cheerful restaurant in the theater district serving fine Northern Italian cuisine, with a menu that includes fritto misto, risotto, and a variety of pizzas and pastas. *142 W. 44th St. (944-3643). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Osteria del Circo—The restaurant of the moment, partly because of its excellent bloodlines (Sirio Maccioni's brood of charming sons runs the place) and partly because of its flavorful, home-style Italian menu. Be sure to try anything created by proud mother (and food consultant) Mrs. Maccioni. *120 W. 55th St. (265-3636). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Palio—Stylish midtown duplex restaurant, with a famous muraled bar and elegant preparations of Italian dishes like spinach-and-ricotta gnocchi with a vegetable ragout, and artichoke-and-marjoram ravioli in fresh tomato sauce. *151 W. 51st St. (245-4850). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Ruth's Chris Steakhouse—A steak cooked in butter is the centerpiece of this successful upscale chain's take-no-prisoners march east across the country. Steak—and, for iconoclasts, the inevitable chops, chicken, and lobster—served in a series of connected, muted, and wood-paneled dining rooms. Serious wines, too. *148 W. 51st St. (245-9600). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Tapika—Chef David Walzog's spicy cooking has transformed a formerly subdued space into a lively canteen with his version of haute Southwestern. Try the black-bean purée with chorizo and garlic flatbread or the grilled rabbit loin with cilantro oil and habanero sauce. The bar has its own snack menu and a super selection of microbrews and tequilas. *950 Eighth Ave., at 56th St. (397-3737). (M–E) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Tennessee Mountain Restaurant & Saloon—The midtown offshoot of a SoHo rib joint, this much larger duplex restaurant serves an extensive southern barbecue menu, which is also available for on-and-off-premises catering. Cigar smokers even have their own designated space in which to unmolestedly exhale. The barbecued and hickory-smoked ribs have already made a major impression on Manhattan meat-lovers. *121 W. 45th St. (869-4545). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Tino's.com—This duplex Italian restaurant, done up in an unusual blend of Victorian and modern styles, provides a welcome respite from Fifth Avenue's crazed shopping scene. The Northern Italian menu offers an array of risotti, and the wine list is extensive. *40 W. 56th St. (262-9300). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Torre di Pisa—David Rockwell designed this midtown Italian import as a surreal version of the Leaning Tower. Pane fritto con prosciutto di Parma and fagotto al funghi porcini are examples of the chef's updated Tuscan standards. A separate cigar/smoking room is available for private parties. *19 W. 44th St. (398-4400). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Victor's Cafe 52—A venerable neighborhood haunt with tropical flair. Try the Cuban sandwich or the roast suckling pork. *236 W. 52nd St. (586-7714). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

57th–60th Streets

Dawat—You can't miss with tandoori—cooked before your eyes in the big ovens in the back—or with any of the more unusual regional specials. Actress and cookbook author Madhur Jaffrey supervises the very popular and wide-ranging menu. *210 E. 58th St. (355-7555). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven—The country's entertainment-industry glitterati make themselves right at home in I. M. Pei's monumental dining room. Susan Weaver is one of the only working chefs to combine contemporary presentation and technique with classic Provençal on one plate. The weekend bar scene puts the concept-hotel bar scene to shame. *57 E. 57th St. (758-5700). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Les Célébrités—Plush and elegant, this Art Deco dining room in the Essex House on Central Park South also happens to have a very fine kitchen, turning out dishes like pyramid of tuna tartar and grilled tuna, and roasted lobster with vanilla bean and lemon pasta. And the artwork on the walls is by some very high-profile, and surprising, nonprofessionals. Dinner only; jacket required. *155 W. 58th St. (484-5113). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

The Manhattan Ocean Club—Savor your seafood in an elegant dining room decorated with Picasso ceramics and Brazilian-red-cherry floors. *57 W. 58th St. (371-7777). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Rosa Mexicano—Did someone say "fresh-pomegranate margarita"? Yes, someone did. What's more, this spot prepares your guacamole tableside (a south-of-the-border hibachi?). Some of the tastier gourmet Mexican in the city. *1063 First Ave., at 58th St. (753-7407). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

San Domenico—Toques off to owner Tony May, who may have done more for the cause of serious Italian cooking in New York than any other single restaurateur. His dining room is formal, and the food is wonderful. *240 Central Park So. (265-5959). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, East Side

Club Macanudo—This plush, elegant shrine to cigar-smoking also offers, besides an astonishing selection of smokes, a sophisticated variety of edibles. The American menu, listing such offbeat items as warm lobster enchiladas and pork loin with coffee-barbecue sauce, takes inspiration from Latin and Caribbean cuisines. Jackets required. *26 E. 63rd St. (752-8200). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

El Pollo—This Peruvian chicken joint has stuck with its simple, minimal menu, to the benefit of this otherwise barren neighborhood. Potatoes come four ways, but you can't miss the incredible curly fries. *1746 First Ave., nr. 90th St. (996-7810). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

540 Park @ The Regency Hotel—Named for its address, this American grill at the Regency Hotel has a clubby, comfortable atmosphere. The regional, eclectic menu ranges from seared-tuna spring roll and chicken-fried lobster to barbecued duck and black-bean quesadilla. If the term "power breakfast" didn't originate here, it should have. *540 Park Ave., at 61st St. (339-4050). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

JoJo—The grilled chicken with chickpea frites is a great dish. But then, Jean-Georges Vongerichten doesn't make many mistakes in this elegant, jewel-like dining room situated on two floors of an East Sixties townhouse. Lunch upstairs, overlooking the street, is especially lovely. *160 E. 64th St. (223-5656). (E) AE, MC, V.*

La Soirée d'Asie—The family behind this graciously elegant Vietnamese restaurant on one of the Upper East Side's most charming blocks has already established a stronghold in Connecticut. The Manhattan branch is more upscale, but serves a similar mix of classic and contemporary dishes like spring rolls, curries, and special soups. *156 E. 64th St. (421-7899). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Nino's—Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. *1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (988-0002). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Park Avenue Cafe—A polished, countrified American café for business lunches and off-duty get-to-know-yous in the evening. Chef David Burke makes the tired catchall "American fare" sing, and keeps the haute neighbors rapt with signature dishes like rack of lamb and his swordfish chop. *100 E.*

ASK GAEL

I want a real taste of Vietnam.

Crisp banh xeo (stuffed rice-coconut crêpe) and shrimp-bass-jícama-mushroom dumplings in broth (pictured above) are new dishes at Cyclo, my favorite spot for this fragrant cuisine. But everything we tasted on a recent wintry night—steamed ravioli, wok-seared monkfish, beef in oxtail soup, and crisp gingered duck—had that extra edge of refinement. On his next trip back home, owner Steven Duong will procure new tableware as well as recipes, he promises (203 First Avenue; 673-3975). Returning to Da Lat for the first time in ten years has also fired chef Viet Tran to a new high at Le Colonial. The hauteur at the door hasn't flagged, but the food is even better than I remember it in this striking Old Saigon setting (149 East 57th Street; 752-0808).

Photograph by Robert Wright.

63rd St. (644-1900). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.

Park View at the Boathouse—This Central Park landmark has been renovated and updated with an Asian-influenced menu from chef John Villa. Technical improvements have made it possible to keep the restaurant on the lake open all year round, though those who miss visiting it during the summer months do so at their own peril. Choose among new menu items like Gulf shrimp in rice paper roll, and Indian-spiced salmon tartare with mango and cucumber. *Central Park, nr. 72nd St. and Fifth Ave. (517-2233). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *1596 Second Ave., nr. 83rd St. (585-3838). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Post House—Clubby and comfortable, this handsome dining room specializes in good quality and big portions. The peppery Cajun-style steak is a favorite, especially with a side order of French fries or onion rings. There are dishes with decidedly less cholesterol—poached salmon, say, or lemon chicken—but this isn't a place to watch your waistline. Seriously. *28 E. 63rd St., in the Lowell Hotel (935-2888). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Primavera—This elegant uptown restaurant serves sophisticated renditions of Northern Italian food, like baby eels with oil and garlic, and roasted baby goat. The comfortable wood-paneled room, lit with antique fixtures and filled with fresh flowers, brings a touch of luxury to the neighborhood. *1578 First Ave., nr. 82nd St. (861-8608). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Regional Thai Sa-Woy—The well-spiced, artfully presented food at this two-story Thai restaurant costs a bit more than it would at your run-of-the-mill pad thai parlor, but the peaceful ambience and elegant, antique-strewn décor may very well put you in the mood to splurge. *1479 First Ave., at 77th St. (744-6374). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, West Side

Cafe des Artistes—A smartly run, wonderfully romantic bistro with frolicking nudes on the walls. Open and serving all the time. Stop in before or after a jaunt to Lincoln Center. *1 W. 67th St. (877-3500). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Gabriela's—Real Mexican food. Don't come here for bulging burritos, but for fragrant chicken soup, steamed tamales that taste like corn, and tender pork marinated in Seville orange juice and spices. Try the *licuados*, fruit shakes, and the *aguas frescas*, fresh-fruit drinks, to cool off. *685 Amsterdam Ave., at 93rd St. (961-0574). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

La Caridad—Chino-Latino soul food in a neighborhood notoriously devoid of restaurant personality. Mammoth portions, enormous lines. *2199 Broadway, at 78th St. (874-2780). (I) ($).*

Londel's—Food cooked soulfully on a blooming strip off Strivers Row. Live music most nights and velvet rope at the front door create an ambience not often associated with home cooking. Try the smothered pork chops, but be forewarned: Everything's cooked to order—*slow*-cooked to order. *2620 Frederick Douglass Blvd., at 140th St. (234-6114). (I–M) CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

M&G Diner—Dropping-off-the-bone short-rib sandwiches at the counter and low-key comfort. Jukebox is worth scanning. *383 W. 125th St. (864-7326). (I) ($).*

Merlot Bar & Grill—This wine-besotted restaurant near Lincoln Center offers a French-American menu that complements offerings from the 600-bottle cellar and features two-week-long vintner's dinners. Signature dishes include wild-mushroom strudel, jumbo lump crab cakes, and osso buco of monkfish. Also open for lunch and late-night dining. *48 W. 63rd St. (363-7568). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *240 Columbus Ave., at 71st St. (769-3988). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Picholine—Chef Terrance Brennan's French-Mediterranean cuisine is as beautiful to look at as it is delicious to eat. Try the risotto, smoky with tender duck and wild mushrooms, and velvety foie gras with peach coulis, and save room for a glass of port to accompany the amazingly rich and well-chosen cheese course. *35 W. 64th St. (724-8585). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Restaurant 222—Cozy and romantic, with the feel of a townhouse, Frank Valenza's top-rated New American West Sider is a luxurious surprise in a neighborhood nearly bereft of them. The menu is full of high-ticket items like Beluga caviar, Kobe steak, truffles, and foie gras, which makes the $29.95 pretheater dinner, available from 5 to 6:30, a great deal. And now, lunch is served Tuesday through Friday. *222 W. 79th St. (799-0400). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Sarabeth's—This New York institution is a homey place for upscale down-home food like chicken potpie and pancakes. It also offers a children's menu and a mouthwatering bakery counter, with homemade, award-winning jams and preserves. *423 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 80th St. (496-6280). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Sylvia's—A staple of the neighborhood, with a tradition and ambience strong enough to draw loyal customers from uptown and downtown. Live entertainment that truly aids digestion. *328 Lenox Ave., bet. 126th and 127th Sts. (996-0660). (I) ($).*

Wells—A talked-about chicken-and-waffle combination. One way or another, this restaurant has been a neighborhood mainstay for nearly 60 years. *2247 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd., at 132nd St. (234-0700). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Brooklyn

Cucina—A labor of love. Northern Italian in an elegant and very well appointed room. Sensational antipasti. *256 Fifth Ave., nr. Garfield Pl. (718-230-0711). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Lundy Bros.—This restored landmark restaurant serves a wide-ranging menu of fish, pasta, chicken, and steak but specializes in lobster and other varieties of seafood. Don't miss the oyster bar or the reconstructed shore dinner. Sunday brunch buffet available. *1901 Emmons Ave. (718-743-0022). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Peter Luger's—Steak for one, steak for two, steak for four, and creamed spinach. Apply for your own house credit card, or bring cash. *178 Broadway, at Bedford Ave. (718-387-7400). (E) ($).*

Two Tom's—Firehouse-kitchen ambience and a waiter who tells you what you want to eat. The double-rib pork chops are peerless, and the escarole is great, too, but refuse the mercilessly overcooked pasta when it's offered. Eat early during the week and call ahead on weekends. Regular private parties make getting a table frustrating, but it's always worth the trouble. *255 Third Ave., nr. Union St. (718-875-8689). (I) ($).*

Queens

Elias Corner—Mix with the locals in Astoria as they queue up for a table at this Greek fish tavern. Don't wait for a menu; it won't come. Instead, eyeball the counter as you enter. If the offerings look like today's catch, they are. The owner fetches the fish each morning. Opt for the deep-fried, pinky-size bait fish over the squid. *24-01 31st St., at Astoria Blvd. (718-932-1510). (M) ($).*

Water's Edge—Every table has a view of Manhattan. A quiet and elegant space to partake of fancy American fare like roasted-chestnut soup and red snapper poached in orange-saffron infusion with baby fennel and chervil. Jacket required. *44th Dr. at the East River (718-482-0033). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Staten Island

Aesop's Tables—Arrive by ferry or bridge to this charming bistro and garden that serves inventive, bold Mediterranean fare with an emphasis on handpicked fresh seafood. *1233 Bay St., Rosebank (718-720-2005). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

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Concerts

Muhal Richard Abrams & Gerry Hemingway—With Thomas Buckner, Regina Carter, Mark Dresser, Marty Ehrlich, and Hazardous Materials. 2/25 at 8. *Merkin Concert Hall at Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330). $10.*

The Black Crowes—Skin-and-bones Mick Jagger impersonator Chris Robinson brings his merry band of new-jack classic rockers to the Upper West Side for two nights of roof-raising blues mayhem. 2/25 and 2/27 at 8. *Beacon Theater, 2124 Broadway, at 75th St. (307-7171). $29.50.*

Busta Rhymes—With Flipmode Squad. 2/25 at 8. *Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. (307-7171). $25.*

Hamza El Din—Mingling trad-Arab music with the sounds of the Upper Nile, the singer and lute-player offers some fine Nubian sounds. 2/27 at 8. *Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway, at 95th St. (864-5400). $21.*

"Feeding Frenzy"—Anthony Coleman, David Moss, Min Xiao-Fen, Chris Genoversa, Linda Kaufman, Geetika Khanna. 2/27 at 10. *The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. bet. 10th and 11th Aves. (255-5793). $15.*

Michael Feinstein—Continuing his exploration of the cabaret canon, the singer and scholar puts on a tribute to the inimitable Johnny Mercer. With John Bucchino, Craig Carnelia, Steven Lutvak, Babbie Green, Michele Brourman, David Friedman, Amanda McBroom, and Margaret Whiting. 2/24 at 8. *Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (307-7171). $40.*

Enrique Iglesias—Julio's only slightly less worthy young son hasn't quite got his dad's touch, yet. But give the boy time—he'll have 'em crying and throwing underwear before you know it. 2/23 at 8. *Madison Square Garden, Seventh Ave. at 32nd St. (307-7171). $25–$55.*

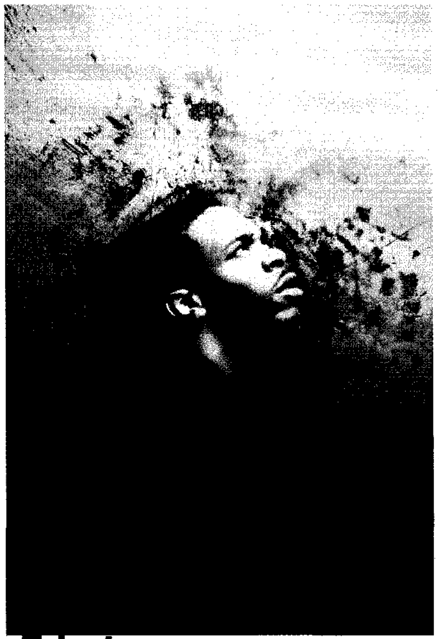
"Jazz Cubano"—Juan Pablo Torres and His Big Band Orchestra, including Bebo Valdés, Israel López, Orestes Velató, Cándido, others. 2/27 at 8. *Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. (840-2824). $15–$30.*

Billy Joel—The Long Island homeboy put in an extended run at Nassau Coliseum last year. In case any Garden State fans couldn't hack the long haul to Uniondale, Joel puts in one more night in the 'burbs. 2/23 at 8. *Continental Airlines Arena, East Rutherford, N.J. (212-307-7171). $39.50.*

"Jump Festival Five"—Sadly, Jaki Byard—who was to be one of this two-night shindig's stars—was shot and killed last week, but the show goes on. 2/24 at 6:30: Rashied Ali; Chicago Underground with Chad Taylor; Andrew Bemkey; Bill Fiorella and the Magical Orchestra of Truth. 2/25 at 6:30: Kin Ship; Andrew Bemkey; Unified Quest. *The New School, 55 W. 13th St. (229-5896). $10.*

David Krakauer and Guy Klucevsek—Krakauer's genre-busting clarinet work mingles klezmer, bop, and swing with panache few can muster. Klucevsek's way-out accordion playing takes avant-garde free-jazz and a range of candy-pop influences (we're talking Bacharach and Goffin territory), throws them in the cultural Cuisinart, and sees what happens. The two of them together should be both thrilling and puzzling 2/26–2/27 at 8. *The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. bet. 10th and 11th Aves. (255-5793). $15.*

Patti LaBelle and Gerald Levert—If you like a little sugar in your bowl, there's no better source for it than these elder statespeople of soul. 2/26–2/27 at 8. *Westbury Music Fair, 960 Brush Hollow Rd. (516-334-0800). $50.*



Talent

Busta's Big Score

Busta Rhymes—he of the rubbery limbs, manic rap skills, and surrealist imagery—is joined by his hip-hop supergroup, Flipmode Squad, February 25 at Roseland.

Joe McPhee—Ornette Coleman has his "Harmolodics"; William Parker's got "Creative Music"; McPhee's name for his anti-systemic music system is "Po." As in *possible, potential,* and (presumably), *poor.* Whatever name it goes by, the "out" end of the jazz spectrum provides some difficult (and rewarding) listening—this time in a rare, uptown venue. 3/1 at 8. *Carnegie Hall, 154 W. 57th St. (247-7800). $30.*

Ali Akbar Moradi & Kayhan Kalhor—The Iranian lutist and fiddler play traditional Kurdish music. 2/26 at 8. *Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway, at 95th St. (864-5400). $21.*

Nana Mouskouri—The bespectacled Greek superstar sings songs of love, loss, and spirituality in about nineteen (okay, probably five) different languages. 2/28 at 7. *Westbury Music Fair, 960 Brush Hollow Rd. Westbury, Long Island. (516-334-0800). $30.*

"The Music of Duke Ellington"—Informal lecture-interviews and demonstrations, with host Arnold Jay Smith. 2/23: Baritone saxophonist Joe Temperley. 3/2: Louise Michelle. Lectures at 7:45. *The New School, 66 W. 12th St. (229-5690). $25 per lecture; $100 for series of six.*

"Music of the Jewish Spirit"—St. Luke's Chamber Orchestra with Cantor Fredda Rakusin Mendelson. 2/23 at 8. *92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100). $25.*

The Offspring—Pretty fly—for four irony-besotted punk-rock guys. With Ozomatli. 2/26–2/28 at 7:30. *Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. (307-7171). $18.*

Sonic Youth—In their own noisy way, Moore, Gordon, Ranaldo, and Shelley have become as iconic a New York band as, say, the Velvets. Such legitimacy doesn't imply, of course, that the group's succumbed to routine. Far from it: If anything, their live shows of late have been fresher and more full of surprises than ever. Blustery tenorman David S. Ware opens the proceedings with a bracing jolt of Coltrane-influenced sound. 2/27 at 8. *Hammerstein Ballroom at the Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St. (307-7171). $19.50.*

Super Son Cubano—2/27 at 8. *Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. (840-2824). $25–$35.*

Clubland

Arlene Grocery—The Lower East Side's newish, hippish, and appealingly inexpensive (okay, free) rock and folk venue. 2/23: Deni Bonet. 2/25: Dave Ellis. 2/26: Life in a Blender; Reid Paley. 2/27: Passion Fruit. *95 Stanton St. (358-1633). $.*

Bottom Line—A top-notch venue—with great sound, good sight lines, and pretty decent fries—given to rock, jazz, and folk artists of all stripes. 2/22: Bacon Brothers. 2/25: David Johansen; Harry Smiths. 2/26: Loudon Wainwright, III. 2/27: Joe Grushecky & the Houserockers. 2/28: Southside Johnny; Graham Parker. *15 W. 4th St. (228-7880).*

Bowery Ballroom—The Mercury Lounge's roomy new Lower East Side outpost, where up-and-comers can hone their big-room chops. 2/23: Chavez. 2/26: Everything; Angry Salad. 2/27: Dave Alvin; Robbie Fulks. 3/1: Mudhoney. 3/2–3/3: Eve 6; Marvelous 3. *6 Delancey St. (533-2111).*

Brownies—Avenue A's divey post-college rock spot, with good tap beers, on-the-rise bands, and the occasional big name trying to keep a low profile. Cozy and congenial, even if you're not pierced. 2/25: Clowns for Progress. 2/27: Bush Tetras. *161 Avenue A, at 11th St. (420-8392). $.*

Chicago B.L.U.E.S.—A downtown blueserie, comfortably down-home, with living-room couches behind the stage. Dedicated to bringing us the best and brightest from the midwestern blues capital. 2/22: 9 Degrees Below Zero. 2/23: Lenny Michelle. 2/24: Tony O. 2/25: Little Sammy Davis. 2/26–2/27: Lonnie Brooks. *73 Eighth Ave., bet. 13th and 14th Sts. (924-9755). $.*

China Club—2/28: Alice Ripley; Emily Skinner. *268 W. 47th St. (398-3800).*

Coney Island High—Originally a glam-trash revival hall, this two-level East Village funhouse now reflects the neighborhood's cultural diversity, with indie-rock and punk bands sharing the venue with some of the city's wackiest parties. 2/26–2/27: Go Kart Weekend. *15 St. Marks Pl. (674-7959).*

Fez—Mingus fever and lush *faux*-Moroccan ambience make this the neo-boho place to be on Thursdays, when the mighty Mingus Big Band rocks the house, playing the works of the great, brawling bassist with a freshness and authority rarely seen in jazz today. Sundays: Jackie Beat's "Uptown Lady, Downtown Girl." *Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (533-2680).*

Ground Rules:

In clubland, promptness is *not* next to godliness; expect shows to start much later than promised. $ = cash only.

Photograph by Dean Karr.

Knitting Factory—The ever-expanding Disneyland of downtown music, with three floors, four stages, four microbrew-bearing bars, and some of the biggest names in now music. Chill out in the subbasement Old Office lounge. 2/23: Greg Cohen. 2/24: DJ Spooky; Sound Lab; Kodwo Eshun. 2/26: Sominic Frasca; William Hooker; DJ Olive. 2/27–2/28: Plastic People of the Universe; Walter Thompson. *74 Leonard St., bet. Broadway and Church St. (219-3055). $*

Manny's Car Wash—A little Chicago on the Upper East Side. Mondays, beware salivating yuppie swells here for ladies' night. Every Sunday, it's Manny's World Famous Blues. Mondays: Craig Dreter & Friends. 2/23: Chesterfields. 2/24: Kenny Neal. 2/25: Jimmy Vivino's Jam. 2/26: Water Street. 2/27: Todd Wolfe. *1558 Third Ave., bet. 87th and 88th Sts. (369-BLUES).*

Maxwell's—After a couple years' dormancy, New Jersey's (and perhaps the tri-state area's) finest rock club is back with a vengeance. 2/25: Illness; Lunchbox Heroes. 2/26: Amy Rigby. 2/27: Richie Havens. 3/2: Mudhoney. *1039 Washington St., Hoboken, N.J. (201-653-1703).*

Mercury Lounge—Once a headstone parlor, now one of the city's hippest and most congenial music spots, hosting rock and country artists groomed for the more au courant time slots of MTV. 2/22: Green; Springwell; MJ12. *217 E. Houston St. (260-4700).*

Shine—Every Tuesday night at this hot and happening TriBeCa spot, live drum-and-bass outfit Nerve kicks the fluttering beats and deep sounds. 2/24: "Grammy Party." 2/26: Ivana Santilli. 3/3: Dove Tail Joint. *285 West Broadway, at Canal St. (941-0900).*

The Supper Club—A large, grand ballroom with a starry ceiling and challenging acoustics. Fridays and Saturdays at 8 P.M., the Supper Club's house big-band swings with abandon. 3/2: Rufus Wainwright (see box, right). *240 W. 47th St. (921-1940).*

Swing 46—Another Theater District retro-house that draws zoot-suited big-band, jump-blues, and swing-revival fanatics. Is it jazz? Not really. Is it fun? You betcha. Most nights, sets at 10; free dance lessons at 7 and 9. $7–$12 cover; two-drink minimum. Tuesdays in February: Nick Palumbo & the Flipped Fedoras. Wednesdays: The Blue Saracens. Thursdays: George Gee & His Make-Believe Ballroom Orchestra. 2/22: Felix and All the Cats. 2/26: Nick Palumbo. 2/27–2/28: Blue Saracens. *349 W. 46th St. (262-9554).*

Tramps—One of the city's better venues for great roots music and happening indie rock, Tramps eschews high concept for straightforward presentation. Avoid the neck-craning mid-stage column by arriving early. 2/26–2/27: Jerry Jeff Walker. *51 W. 21st St. (727-7788).*

Wetlands—A groovy club-kid activist hang with neo-hippie atmosphere and far-flung musical guests. N.B.: Tuesday night is (Grateful) Dead Night. Monday is the long-running drum-and-bass extravaganza "Konkrete Jungle." 2/23: *Hedwig & the Angry Inch*; Adam Pascale. 2/24: Company Flow. 2/25: Badawi; M'lumbo; Wunmi; Kobalt 6; DJ Mutamassik. 2/26: Conehead Buddha; Yolk. 2/27: One Fell Swoop; Push Stars. *161 Hudson St. (966-5244)* $.

Jazz

Birdland—Proof that jazz is alive and well in midtown, this classy boîte serves up some fine southern cuisine along with its first-rate lineup. Every Sunday night, Chico O'Farrill's smoking Afro-Cuban Jazz Orchestra. Every Monday night, the Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra. Every Friday, the Lew Anderson Big Band swings from 5:30 to 7:30. 2/23: Maria Schneider. 2/24: Patrick Zimmerli Quartet. 2/25–2/27: Lew Tabackin Quartet; Nicholas Payton. $15–$20 cover; $10 minimum. Sets at 9 and 11:30. *315 W. 44th St. (581-3080).*

Blue Note—With a first-rate sound system and a decent view from every seat in the house, the "jazz capital of the world" often presents two top-flight artists in one evening. 2/23–2/28: Dr. John. Sets at 9 and 11:30. *131 W. 3rd St. (475-8592).*

Detour—With no cover and top-notch young players, this cozy, tiled East Village joint packs 'em in every night of the week. Sundays: Mike Magillian. 2/22: Marya Lawrence. 2/23: Miri Ben-Ari. 2/24: Jeff Lopez Quartet. 2/25: Matt Hong. 2/26: Art Owens. 2/27: Michel Gentile. 3/1: John Funkahauser. 3/2: Larry Corban Trio. 3/3: Kerry Politzer Quartet. *349 E. 13th St. (533-6212).*

Dharma—An elegant little gem of a club, serving sounds from funky bop to "out" experimentalism on the historic shopping thoroughfare—just don't pay retail. Sets at 7 and 10. Happy Hour, Thursdays: Nick Demopolous. Fridays: Junin Booth and Algen. Saturdays: Topaz. 2/25: Reid Anderson. 2/26: Dave Finezynski. 2/27: Jeff Peretz. *174 Orchard St., bet. Houston and Stanton. (780-0313).*

Flea Theatre—Throughout November, the TriBeCa space presents the "Premiere Percussion" series, featuring some of the city's most adventurous rhythm-makers. 2/23: Talujon. Sets at 8; $10 cover. *41 White St. (226-0051).*

Iridium—In the cozy basement across from Lincoln center, you'll find some of the finest chow in jazzland, plus formidable jazz comers and the occasional legend. Thoughtful table placement minimizes a couple of structural columns' potentially disastrous effects on sight lines. Monday nights, the Les Paul Trio holds office hours. 2/23–2/28: Bobby Hutcherson Quintet & Kenny Garrett. Sets at 8:30 and 10:30, Sun.–Thurs., with extra midnight set Fri. and Sat. *44 W. 63rd St., across from Lincoln Center (582-2121).*

Jazz at Noon—East midtown's long-running, Friday-afternoon jam session—where Dizzy Gillespie, Clark Terry, and Elvin Jones have all been visiting scholars—returns for its thirty-third season, with the usual high-caliber house band. 2/26: Jerry Dodgion. Noon–2:30 P.M. $5 cover. *San Martin Restaurant, 143 E. 49th St. (832-0888).*

The Jazz Standard—A sprawling room with terrific sound and the best club menu in the city, the Jazz Standard offers a fresh mix of estimable hard-boppers, living legends, and hungry young comers. Mon., Tues., and Fri. at 5:30 and Sat. at 7, guitarist David O'Rourke swings in the upstairs 27 Standard bar. Sets Tues.–Thurs. at 9 and 11, Fri. and Sat. at 8, 10:30, and midnight, Sun. at 7. $15–$25 cover; $10 minimum. *116 E. 27th St. (576-2232).*

Red Blazer—Reopened in a new spot, the famed Theater District jazzerie continues to offer up fine sounds. Alternate Thursdays in February, Blues Eyes aficionado Cary Hoffman and the Stan Rubin Orchestra present "Sinatra: The Best of the Fifties." Mondays: Lenore and the Dukes. Tuesdays: Sol Yaged's Swing Band. Wednesdays: Bob Litwak; Scott Hamilton. Fridays: New Yorker Big Band. Saturdays: Bob Cantwell Jazz Sextet. Sunday Jazz Brunch: Sam Ulano's Bourbon Street Swingers. $10 cover; two-drink minimum. *32 W. 37th St. (262-3112).*

Savoy Lounge—Nestled beneath the Port Authority Bus Terminal, this truly funky soul-jazz joint features sawdust on the floor, cheap beer in bottles, and a Hammond organ in the corner. $3–$7 cover; no minimum. *355 W. 41st. St. (947-5255). $.*

Session 73—Shows at 9:30. 2/25: Chesterfields. 2/26: Muscle Funk. 2/27: Jack Dermand; Super Human. *1359 First Ave. (517-4445).*

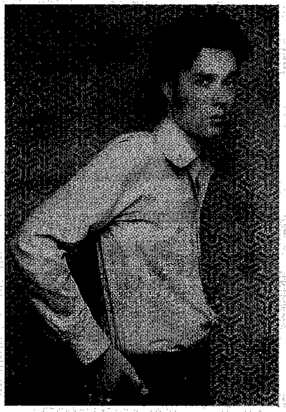
Small's—Extremely cozy and open all night, offering after-hours jazz until 8 A.M. It's a candlelit basement whose nightly jams start round about 2 A.M.—the perfect time for a post–Village Van-

Talent

Rufus's Revenge

If life were a Puccini opera—and for many of us, it assuredly is—the slight, seductive Rufus Wainwright would no doubt cast himself as the tubercular hero, struggling bravely toward bittersweet redemption. As it turns out, opera is "like, a guiding passion" for the 25-year-old—who, by his own rapturously detailed account, has survived feuding parents, personal excess, and a series of junkie boyfriends to become one of the most lauded singer-songwriters of his generation. The singer, who describes himself as "a cross between Judy Garland and Mahler," kicks off a two-month national tour at the Supper Club, March 3. Two years ago, a penniless Wainwright was housesitting in a palatial Park Avenue apartment, passing out drunk on the sidewalk in front of Jackie 60, and vainly trying to jump-start his career. Despondent, he fled New York for L.A., where he landed in an apartment complex near Burbank that catered mostly to prepubescent sitcom stars. "It was a strange, lonely existence," he recalls. "I lived there with all these child stars and a bunch of traveling salesmen who would pursue them beside the pool. But I learned to adapt: Once I had a contract and a name to drop, I made a lot of friends." With a push from his father, notoriously cranky singer-songwriter Loudon Wainwright III (now, according to Rufus, "incredibly ambivalent" over his son's success), he turned angst over his ill-fated love affairs into grist for a lush, achingly personal album. But despite the rapturous acclaim his self-titled debut has received, Wainwright remains unsatisfied. "There's so much more to do," he says with an overwrought sigh. "My mother"—folksinger Kate McGarrigle—"always warns me not to get too impressed with myself." Not one for modest gestures, Wainwright vows to become nothing less than the voice of his generation. A Gap model who also walked the runways for Perry Ellis and Anna Sui last week, he sees himself as Cole Porter in a pocket tee. But while he's pleased with his new life's perks ("It's a lot easier to get laid these days"), he concedes that success can be as difficult as starvation. "When you're on all the time, you really can't have a substantial relationship with anyone," he complains. "And it gets *really* lonely singing all those love songs. But in the end, you need to suffer for your art. Though it does help if you have a few drinks before you get onstage."

MAER ROSHAN



Photograph by Alison Dyer/Dreamworks Records.

guard visit (it's right around the corner)—and often involve free beverages and food. Shows start at 10. *183 W. 10th St. (929-7565). $.*

Sweet Basil—An intimate downtown restaurant with good food and high-profile jazz acts. Every Saturday, jazz brunch with Ilhan Ersahin. Sundays, Chuck Folds hosts "the original jazz brunch." Every Monday, it's the Spirit of Life Ensemble. Sets at 9 and 11, with extra sets Fri. and Sat. at 12:30 A.M. 2/23–2/26: Jean Michel Pilc Trio. *88 Seventh Ave. So., at Bleecker St. (242-1785).*

Tavern on the Green—A somewhat overwrought restaurant in a touristy Central Park rest stop, the Tavern now offers the occasional pianist in its "Crystal Room." Like a trip to Vegas—without the airfare! 2/24–2/27: Rich Siegel. Four-hour sets begin at 6:30 weeknights, at 7 on weekends. No cover; no minimum. *Central Park at W. 67th St. (873-3200).*

Tonic—Yet another impeccably hip Lower East Side avant-jazzerie, this alcohol-free sub-Delancey hole-in-the-wall's got its sights set on the Knitting Factory crowd. Sunday: Klezmer Sundays. Ensemble. 2/24: John Zorn. 2/25: Double Bowne. 2/26: Yuka Honda; Sean Lennon; Liminal. 2/27: Oscar Noriega; Michael Blake. *107 Norfolk St. (358-7503). $.*

Village Vanguard—Perhaps the world's greatest jazz club, and certainly the most steeped in history, this dark, smoky institution is revered by fans around the world. Study the photos of jazz icons, dig the curtains Miles Davis once played to, and sneak a glance inside the kitchen, an Algonquin Round Table for the bop age. Mondays, the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra swings on. 2/23–2/28: Barry Harris Trio. Sets at 9:30 and 11:30, with a late 1 A.M. set Fri. and Sat. *178 Seventh Ave. So., at W. 11th St. (255-4037). $.*

Zinno—This pretty Italian restaurant has good sight lines from most of the tables (but largely obscured ones from the bar), and enough top-flight players to make it a serious jazz spot. 2/23–2/27: John Bunch, Bucky Pizzarelli, and Jay Leonhart. *126 W. 13th St. (924-5182).*

Performance

Four *Fly* Guys

You've gotta hand it to the Offspring: A focus group couldn't have come up with a snappier concept for a hit than the So-Cal quartet's ubiquitous "Pretty Fly (For a White Guy)." Bumping hip-hop beat; simmering sex-pot backing vocals worthy of LL Cool J; a chunky-but-funky guitar riff; and, best of all, lyrics that put down honkies who hop the rap bandwagon! These masters of post-punk irony bring their singular take on self-hatred to Roseland February 26 through 28. (See "Concerts.")

Comedy

Boston Comedy Club—*Animal House* ambience and, most nights, comedy to match. Tues.–Thurs., shows at 9:30; Fri.–Sat., shows at 8,10, and midnight. Jim Norton, DC Benny, Jim Gaffigan, Robert Kelly, Jordan Rubin, Nick Swardson, & Macio. *82 W. 3rd St. (477-1000).*

Carolines Comedy Club—In Times Square just down the street from the *Letterman* show, Carolines hosts big names and talented up-and-comers in its wide, elegant, TV-studio-like basement. Mondays, "New Talent Night," hosted by Eddie Brill. 2/23: Angela LaGreca's Tuesday Nite Madness. 2/24: "Hot 97—Scoop." 2/25: Mike Robles' Comedy Rhumba. 2/26: Dr. Dre's Phat & Outrageous. 2/25–2/28: Craig Shoemaker. 2/28: Judy Gold & Edie. *1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (757-4100). $12.50–$24.50, two-drink minimum.*

Comedy Cellar—A physical throwback to sixties Village coffeehouses, this is the late-night subterranean haunt of many of the city's top comics. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11; Sat. at 8:30, 10:15, and midnight; and Sun.–Thurs. at 9. 2/22–2/28: Mitch Fatel; Gregg Rogell; Todd Barry; Jim Norton. *117 MacDougal St. (254-3480).*

Comic Strip—Probably the most expertly booked club in the city, this showcase offers an eclectic mix of comedians every night of the week. *1568 Second Ave., bet. 81st and 82nd Sts. (861-9386).*

Dangerfield's—Founded by the respect-deprived comedian two decades ago, this Vegas-style lounge is one of the city's oldest comedy establishments. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11:15; Sat. at 8, 10:30, and 12:30 A.M.; Sun.–Thurs., continuous from 8:45. Cover is $15 Fri. and Sat.; $12.50 on weeknights; no minimum. 2/22–2/28: Carie Karavas; Justin McKinney; Rich Ramirez; Nancy Redman; Joe Mulligan; Richie Byrne. *1118 First Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (593-1650).*

Gotham—An elegant, trendy, and palatial comedy spot in the Flatiron district. Sun.–Thurs. at 8:30; Fri. and Sat. at 8:30 and 10:30. Cover is $12 Fri. and Sat., $8 on weeknights. Two-drink minimum. 2/26–2/27: Paul H. Mercurio; Louis Ramey, Judy Gold; *34 W. 22nd St. (367-9000).*

Stand-up New York—Robin Williams is known to drop by here unannounced to warm up for his *Letterman* appearances. Cover is $7–$12. Shows: Sun.–Thurs. at 7 and 9; Fri. at 7, 9, and 11:30. Sat. at 8, 10, and 12:15. 2/26–2/27: Louie C.K.; Patty Roseborough; William Stephenson; Susie Essman. *236 W. 78th St. (595-0850).*

Upright Citizens Brigade Theater—New York's favorite sketch-comedy troupe lost a TV show, gained a live theater. Not a bad trade. UCB members perform four nights a week, with other comics taking up the little bit of slack left. All shows $5 or less; call for show times. *161 W. 22nd St. (366-9176). $.*

Cabaret

Asti—Singing-waiter frolics, with an emphasis on opera and operetta, are the keynote of this Village landmark. Late dining. *13 E. 12th St. (741-9105).*

Bemelmans Bar—Tuesday–Saturday at 9:30: Peter Mintun. $10 music charge; no minimum. *Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600).*

Cafe Carlyle—Tuesday–Saturday at 9:30: Eartha Kitt growls and purrs her way into history. Every Monday, Woody Allen swings through the early set with Eddy Davis & His New Orleans Jazz Band. Sets at 8:45 and 10:45. $50 ($25 for Davis's late, Woody-free set); no minimum. *Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600).*

Clementine—Phoebe Legere's "Swoon." With Swingalicious. Sundays at 8 and 10:30. *1 Fifth Ave. (253-0003).*

Duplex Cabaret—Thursdays and Saturdays through 2/27. "Daddy's Girl" featuring Lorinda Lisitza. Sets at 10. *Duplex Theatre, 61 Christopher St. at Sheridan Square (255-5438). $15.*

Eighty-Eight's—A West Village venue whose unassuming façade conceals a top-notch little theater within. $15, with a two-drink minimum. Every Thursday in February and March: Natalie Gamsu. Every Friday and Saturday in February: Charles Cermele. *228 W. 10th St. (924-0088).*

FireBird Café—The theater district's newest post-show snuggery, right next door to an overwrought Russian restaurant—steer clear of the Cossack-dagger-toting doormen and you'll be fine. Tues.–Thurs., sets at 9. Fri. and Sat., sets at 9 and 11. $30 cover; two-drink minimum. Through 4/3: Steve Ross. *363 W. 46th St. (586-0244).*

Judy's—Newly relocated to Chelsea, this cozy and friendly piano-bar features two performance spaces, a fine menu, and a weekly gig by Judy herself. *169 Eighth Ave., bet. 18th and 19th Sts. (929-5410).*

Pyramid—Thursdays, *Midsummer Night's Dream* disco-ballet "The Donkey Show." Doors open at 7:30. *101 Avenue A (971-1016). $12.*

Sardi's—Fridays, John Malino's combo plays jazz standards (no cover). $12 minimum. Thursdays: Mark Nadler. $15, $12 minimum. *234 W. 44th St. (221-8444).*

Tatou—A swank midtown supper club, with dancing, dining, and a dress code. $20 cover; no minimum. 2/23: Joe Cuba. 2/25–2/26: John Malino. 2/27: Jennifer Johnson & the Velvet Groove. *151 E. 50th St. (753-1144).*

Bars

Angel's Share—Tucked discreetly inside an already-discreet second-story Japanese restaurant, this ultra-suave boîte is the ultimate in low-key hipness. The management admits only as many customers (about 30) as there are seats and routinely turns away large parties, to keep rabble-rousing to a minimum. The combination of seclusion, exclusivity, and the bar's legendarily precise (some say obsessive) bartenders results in perhaps the finest experience of its kind in the city. *9 Stuyvesant St., near 9th St. and Third Ave. (598-3041).*

9C—The unassuming neighborhood hang has buckled under the weight of Alphabet City saloon practice, changing its name from "Barcode" to the more efficient, if less imaginative, intersection handle. Fortunately, all its charms are still intact: fire-breathing bartenders, bluegrass, tipsy Pratt students, and—Monday nights—a bluegrass hoedown hosted by Nashville transplant Greg Garing. *700 E. 9th St. (No phone). $.*

Photograph by Steve Double/Retna.

in concert

Emanuel Ax and Yefim Bronfman at Avery Fisher

Classical Music

Tuesday, February 23

New York Philharmonic—Performs Menotti's Violin Concerto and Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde,* with violinist Glenn Dicterow, mezzo Jennifer Larmore, and tenor Richard Leech. Kurt Masur, conductor. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 7:30; $14–$73.*

Saint Louis Symphony—Performs Schat's *Arch Music for St. Louis,* Sibelius's Violin Concerto in D minor, with violinist Christian Tetzlaff, and Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 in A major. Hans Vonk, conductor. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $17–$65.*

Chamber Music Society—The Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio and the Orion String Quartet perform an all-Beethoven program. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (875-5788), at 7:30; $25–$35.*

Wednesday, February 24

Saint Louis Symphony—Performs Messiaen's *Oiseaux exotiques* and *Turangalîla Symphony,* with pianist Garrick Ohlsson. Hans Vonk, conductor. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $17–$65.*

Emanuel Ax and Yefim Bronfman, Pianos—Perform a duo recital of works by Debussy, Satie, and Rachmaninoff. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 8; $20–$40.*

Thursday, February 25

New York Philharmonic—Performs Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4, with pianist Hélène Grimaud, and Liszt's *Dante* Symphony, with the American Boychoir. Kurt Masur, conductor. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 8; $14–$73.*

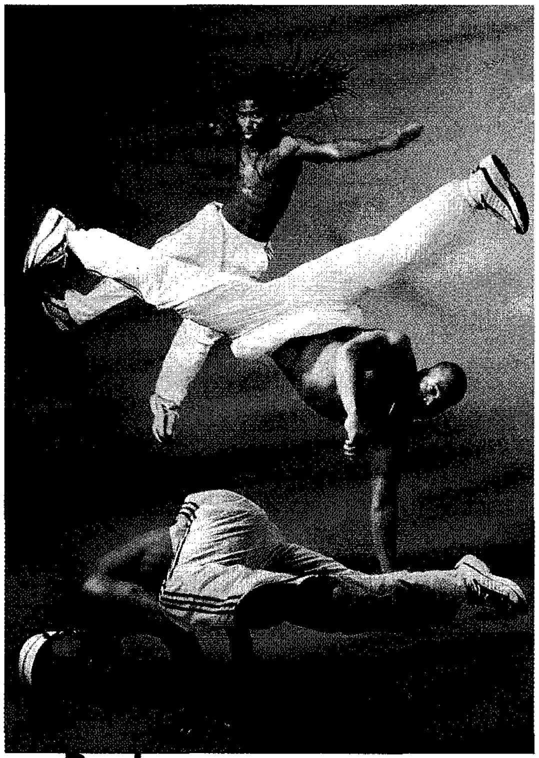
Musicians from Marlboro—Perform Mozart's Quintet for Strings and Horn in E-flat major, Bartók's String Quartet No. 2, and Mendelssohn's String Quintet in A major. *Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (570-3949), at 8; $25.*

Opulent Music—Pianist Michael Boriskin, harpist Mariko Anraku, and the Lark String Quartet perform works by Caplet, Dutilleux, Lourié, and others. *Miller Theater, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. (854-7799), at 8; $20.*

Janos Starker, Cello, and Shigeo Neriki, Piano—Perform the first of two concerts of Beethoven's complete cello works. *92nd St.Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100), at 8; $35.*

Friday, February 26

New York Philharmonic—See 2/25.



Previews

Urban Flight

Straight out of Philly, Rennie Harris and his dance company Puremovement blend traditional African dance with a healthy dose of hip-hop, stepping, and good old-fashioned break dancing, to re-create the everyday dramas of life (and death) on the city streets. (See "Dance.")

Ruth Laredo: "Concerts With Commentary"—Violinist Shmuel Ashkenasi, the Shanghai String Quartet, and double-bassist John T. Kulowitsch perform Schubert's Impromptu for Piano in B-flat major, Duo for Violin and Piano in A major, and Quintet in A major. *Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (570-3949), at 7; $25.*

Ground Rules:

This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and public outdoor performances (but only the premeditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, in a public space. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."

Saturday, February 27

New York Philharmonic—See 2/25.

American Boychoir—Performs a family concert of works by Poston, Billings, Tipton, and others. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 2; $5.*

Les Arts Florissants—Perform Purcell's "Come ye sons of art, away" and "Hail! bright Cecilia." William Christie, conductor. *Opera House, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Brooklyn (718-636-4100), at 7:30; $20–$55.*

Orpheus Chamber Orchestra—Performs works by Mozart, Martinu, Boccherini, and Lieberson, with horn player William Purvis and pianist Andreas Haefliger. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (896-1704), at 8; $18–$70.*

Janos Starker, Cello, and Shigeo Neriki, Piano—Perform the second of two concerts of Beethoven's complete cello works. *92nd St.Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100), at 8; $35.*

Sunday, February 28

Guarneri String Quartet—Perform a 70th-birthday concert for Curtis Institute director Gary Graffman, featuring works by Schnittke, Korngold, Bach/Brahms, and Reger. With Graffman on piano and the Curtis Institute Strings. *92nd St.Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100), at 3; $30.*

Chamber Music Society—Violinist Midori, violist Nobuko Imai, cellist Peter Wiley, and pianist Robert McDonald perform Schubert's Trio in B-flat major, Brahms's Piano Quartet in C minor, and Dvorák's Piano Quartet in E-flat major. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (875-5788), at 5; $25–$35.*

Les Arts Florissants—See 2/27, at 3.

Met Chamber Ensemble—Perform works by Mozart, Berg, Webern, and Mendelssohn, with soprano Alexandra Deshorties. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 5; $80.*

Wolfgang Holzmair, Baritone—Performs songs by Schubert and Wolf, with pianist Russell Ryan. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 2; $32.*

Monday, March 1

"Making Music"—A concert and discussion of works by Pauline Oliveros and others, performed by Oliveros and her Deep Listening Band and others. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $30.*

Opera

Amato Opera—Performs Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera,* 2/27 at 7:30 and 2/28 at 2:30. *319 Bowery (228-8200); $23.*

Dicapo Opera—Performs Verdi's *La Traviata,* 2/26 and 2/27 at 8 and 2/28 at 3. *184 E. 76th St. (288-9438); $25.*

Metropolitan Opera—Performs Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron,* 2/23 and 2/26 at 8; Verdi's *Il Trovatore,* 2/24 at 7:30 and 2/27 at 8; Puccini's *La Bohème,* 2/25 at 8; Strauss's *Elektra,* 2/27 at 2; and Mussorgsky's *Khovanshchina,* 3/1 at 7:30. *Metropolitan Opera House, Lincoln Center (362-6000); $25–$210.*

Dance

Maria Benitez Teatro Flamenco—Performs the New York premieres of five Benitez works, 2/23–2/26 at 8, 2/27 at 2 and 8, and 2/28 at 2. Through 3/7. *Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. (242-0800); $32.*

Rennie Harris Puremovement—Performs Harris's *P Funk, Breath, March of the Antmen,* and *Students of the Asphalt Jungle,* 2/26 at 7, 2/27 at 2 and 7, and 2/28 at noon and 5. *New Victory Theater, 209 W. 42nd St. (239-6200); $10.*

New York City Ballet—Performs *The Goldberg Variations, The Four Seasons, Fanfare,* and other works, 2/23–2/26 at 8, 2/27 at 2 and 8, and 2/28 at 3. *New York State Theater, Lincoln Center (870-5570); $10–$80.*

Jody Oberfelder Dance Projects—Performs the world premieres of *Re: Sound* and *Scope,* 2/25–2/28 at 8. *Joyce Soho, 155 Mercer St. (334-7479); $12.*

Photograph by Bob Emmott.

the mix

Tom Wolfe...Nothing Like a Dame '99

Happening

Learn a Lot of Things From the Flowers

Spring is coming, and it's perfectly acceptable to start giving your garden presents now. Whether you're blessed with a sprawling plot in the Hamptons or just one little well-lit window in a crummy studio, you'll find something to spruce up your garden at the Gramercy Garden Antiques Show (Gramercy Park Armory, February 26 through 28). Eighty exhibitors will provide everything from grand gazebos to cute little pots, and top-notch gardeners will offer lectures throughout the weekend. See "Events" for details.

John Leonard's TV Notes

Just Shoot Me (2/23; 9 to 9:30 P.M.; NBC) asks Laura San Giacomo to play "Hostess to Murder" at a crime-solving mystery party where the whole gang from Blush get to dress up in Victorian drag and go on playacting even after Laura's next-door neighbor drops dead of a heart attack. For some time now, only Wendie Malick has made this puerile sexcom watchable. But Wendie Malick is a lot.

Paul Robeson: Here I Stand (2/24; 9 to 10 P.M.; Channel 13), featuring interviews with his son, his biographer, Harry Belafonte, Uta Hagen, Ossie Davis, Pete Seeger, Howard Fast, and Labour Party MP Tony Benn, takes us from Rutgers to *Show Boat* to *Othello;* from a Spanish Civil War to the Peekskill riot to McCarthyism and electroshock. Don't miss the concert-in-absentia for the Welsh coal miners—whose cause Robeson championed even as they would champion him, with or without a passport. An *American Masters* entry that spares us not a single ugly detail of how we punished black manhood and never for a second apologizes for his radical politics.

Summer's End (2/28; 8 to 9:45 P.M.; Showtime) finishes off Black History Month with a throwback to what I've called the Mockingbird School of race-relations movies, in which black characters are obliged to suffer symbolically in order to teach white folks how to behave. Thus James Earl Jones, the chief of cardiology at a hospital in Atlanta, returns to the north Georgia lakeshore of his traumatic boyhood, where, once upon an earlier time, the bodies of dead slaves were dug up and burned to make room for water sports, and his own father was lynched for leading a strike of construction workers. Only single mother Wendy Crewson is prepared to welcome him. The Civil War will have to be fought all over again so that her young son, Jake LeDoux, will grow up to decency and courage. Not bad for what it is, which, alas, is predictable.

Behind the Mask (2/28; 9 to 11 P.M.; CBS) stars Donald Sutherland as a world-weary and soul-battered doctor-bureaucrat at a "development center" for the mentally handicapped whose tutorial relationship with a proud but damaged Matthew Fox restores his frayed relations with his wife (Mary McDonnell) and adult son (Bradley Whitford). Director Tom McLoughlin has elicited fine performances from a cast that actually seems to care about what it's doing in this TV movie in the old-fashioned social-worker mode. But we are also left with a peculiar definition of manhood, requiring a suit, a tie, a haircut, and a desk. Ahem.

Radio Highlights

The New York Festival of Song—2/24 at 7 P.M.: The first of the series, hosted by Jamie Bernstein-Thomas, daughter of Leonard Bernstein. This segment focuses on New York-themed songs. WQXR, 96.3 FM.

Lost & Found Sound—Fridays at 4 P.M. on WNYC, 820 AM; and at 5 P.M. on WNYC, 93.9 FM: A collection of stories that explores the art and history of recorded sound and creates an audio portrait of the twentieth century by incorporating rare recordings, audio artifacts, and the stories of people whose lives were altered by sound, among them Tony Schwartz, record producer Sam Phillips, playwright Norman Corwin, *Mir* cosmonaut Sergei Krikalev, guitarist Les Paul, the women of all-girl radio station WHER, and hi-fi whiz Emory Cook. Call the 24-hour Quest for Sound Hotline at 202-408-0300 with your suggestions and audio heirlooms for possible inclusion.

Bret Easton Ellis—2/28 at 8 P.M.: The author of *Glamorama* speaks with host Lewis Burke Frumkes. WPAT, 930 AM.

The Written Word

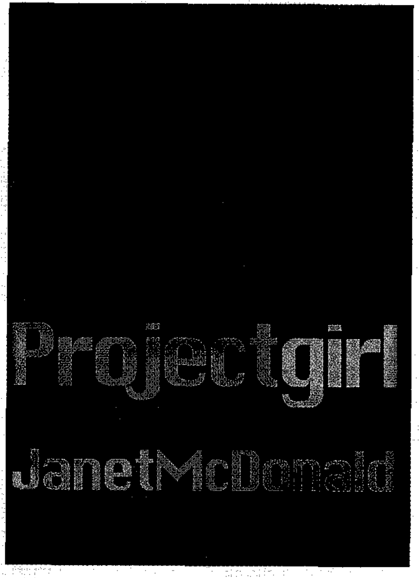
Paul Taylor—2/24 at 7 P.M.: The legendary dancer and choreographer reads from *Private Domain*. Barnes & Noble, 1972 Broadway at 66th St. (595-6859); free.

Photograph courtesy of Proler Oeggerli.

In Print
Project Hope

Sure, Paris is great and all, but it does pose a few problems for a girl from Brooklyn. "It's very hard to get junk food there," says expat author Janet McDonald. "People have to send me Cheez Doodles and Oreos. Of course, my French friends get offended and say, '*Mais* Janet! We have coo-kees here!' " Searching through a sea of éclairs and croissants for one blessed Oreo is a very new kind of challenge for a woman who has endured childhood in the projects, a flirtation with heroin, suicide attempts, rape, and an arrest for arson, as we learn in her memoir *Project Girl.* "For a while there, it was like, God obviously hates me! I'm hoping that all kinds of people can find something in this book to relate to, because I've been through *so* many kinds of struggles. A nice wide variety," she says with a laugh. "I was worried about how my mother would react to the book, and I didn't tell her about it until a few months ago," McDonald says. "Then a friend e-mailed me, 'You know your book is on Amazon.com,' and I thought, *Uh, maybe I'd better tell Mom.*" The breadth of her misfortunes is overshadowed only by her accomplishments at Vassar, Columbia journalism school, and New York University Law School, and in her career. When McDonald isn't writing books, she's busy with her day job: international corporate law. She has yet to get over the thrill of being published, however: "I was at a book signing recently, and when the first customer came in and bought my book, I asked to get my picture taken with her. There was a feeling of triumph to be writing about these things instead of living them." She will be reading on February 27 at N'Kiru Books.

ARIEL LEVY



Selected Shorts—2/24 at 6:30 P.M.: Readings by Barbara Feldon, Jack Davidson, and Cynthia Harris from the short stories of Langston Hughes, John Biguenet, and Michael Frank. Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway, at 95th St. (864-5400); $17.

Janet McDonald—2/27 at 6:30 P.M.: Reading from her memoir, *Project Girl.* N'Kiru Books, 76 St. Marks Ave., Park Slope, Brooklyn (718-783-6306); free.

David Halberstam—3/1 at 7:30 A.M.: Breakfast with the Pulitzer Prize winner, whose last nine books have been best-sellers. 92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100); $30.

Susan Sontag—3/1 at 8 P.M.: At the Unterberg Poetry Center, 92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100); $15.

Lewis Lapham—3/2 at 7 P.M.: Reading from *The Agony of Mamon.* Posman Books, 1 University Pl. (533-2665); free.

Lectures and Panels

Roz Chast Interviewed by Lee Lorenz—2/23 at 6 P.M.: The inaugural lecture in the series "The Art and Craft of Humor Writing." The New York Public Library's Celeste Bartos Forum, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. (930-0571); $10.

"Talk Back Tuesday Night"—2/23 at 10 P.M.: Patricia Goldman, Washington lobbyist and president of the Ovarian Cancer National Alliance, will join the cast for a discussion of the issues raised in the play *Wit.* Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. (957-1222); $35 and $49.50 for tickets to the play.

Tom Wolfe on Marshall McLuhan—2/25 at 6:30 P.M.: The novelist speaks about the media guru. Fordham University Law School, 140 W. 62nd St. (718-817-4400); free.

"Beaux-Arts New York: Skyscrapers and Public Buildings 1890–1920"—2/25 at 6:30 P.M.: Learn how innovations in transportation transformed New York into a world-class metropolis in the first of an eight-part slide lecture series. The Great Hall at Cooper Union, 7th St. at Third Ave. (353-4100); $18.

"The Holocaust in Cinema: Memory, Politics, and Representation"—3/1–3/3: A screening and lecture series with filmmakers, critics, and scholars probing the way cinematic representations of the Holocaust have changed over time, and how they have shaped public awareness. CUNY Graduate School, 33 W. 42nd St. (642-2686); free.

Benefits

"A Walk on the Moon"—2/26 at 10:30 A.M.: A lunch panel and a preview screening of *A Walk on the Moon* with director Tony Goldwyn and stars Diane Lane and Anna Paquin to benefit the New York chapter of the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation. Screening and panel at the Crown Gotham Theatre, Third Ave. between 57th and 58th Sts.; lunch immediately following at the Park Restaurant, 109 E. 56th St. (689-2860); $125.

"Cook for Love"—2/27 at noon: James Lahey, master baker and owner of Sullivan Street Bakery, teaches you how to make rustic breads at home in support of God's Love We Deliver, an organization devoted to enhancing and prolonging the lives of people living with HIV/AIDS. 166 Sixth Ave. (294-8145); $150.

"Nothing Like a Dame '99"—3/1 at 7 P.M.: In support of the Phyllis Newman Women's Health Initiative of the Actor's Fund of America, an evening of entertainment for and about women with Zoe Caldwell, Kathleen Chalfant, Uta Hagen, Ann Jackson, Eartha Kitt, Sharon Lawrence, Anne Meara, Bebe Neuwirth, Marisa Tomei, the Girls Choir of Harlem, and others. Shubert Theatre, 225 W. 44th St. (888-DAME-TIX); $40–$1,000.

Events

Gramercy Garden Antiques Show—2/26–2/28: Pots, plants, fences, furniture, gazebos, and gardening supplies along with educational lectures on the art of green-thumbing your way to happiness. Gramercy Park Armory, 26th St. and Lexington Ave. (255-0020); $10.

New York's Adventure Travel Show—2/27 and 2/28: Meet with international and domestic "adventure providers," explorers, and authors. New York Hilton, 1335 Sixth Ave., at 54th St. (888-366-BOLD); $6.

The Cholesterol Low Down—2/23 at 10:30 A.M.: Free cholesterol screenings with hosts Regis Philbin, Debbie Allen, and the 2G dance troupe. Grand Central Station, Vanderbilt Hall.

Tours

"Life on the Carving Edge: Artists of the Meat-Packing District"—2/28 at 1 P.M.: Art historian Lucie Zolcikova leads a tour of the studios of Mark Mennin, David Horowitz, David Webster, and Thomas Beckman, whose work space was once a meat warehouse. Lobby of Chelsea Food Market, 9th Ave. at 15th St. (996-1100); $20.

Exhibitions

"Secrets of a Beautiful Face"—Through 4/11: An exhibition exploring developments in grooming products and conceptions of beauty for men and women during the nineteenth and twentieth

GAME WEEK

HOME AWAY ●

	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
KNICKS		NJ MSG 7:30PM		MIN MSG 7:30PM	BOS MSG 8PM		
NETS			POR FSNY 7:30PM			BOS FSNY 7:30PM	
RANGERS	CAL MSG 9PM				PHO FSNY 7:30PM		
ISLANDERS				TOR METRO 7:30PM		DET MSG 7PM	
DEVILS	TB FSNY 7PM			BOS FSNY 7PM		PHO FSNY 12PM	
	2/22	2/23	2/24	2/25	2/26	2/27	2/28

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Solutions to last week's puzzles

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Jacobson *continued from page 41*

sheer white expanse, unbroken by a single footprint throughout the entire race card.

Gasper, however, beyond a quick but highly directed visit to the betting window, shuns the indoors, especially the relative plush of the trainer's room. "If the horses are outside, I am outside," he says, sitting under an electric heater with Steve Adika in a clubhouse box.

Meanwhile, Mr. Buffum, 3-to-5 in the final tote flash, is in trouble. Hurried to the lead by jockey Smith, the horse is tired and soon fades into the pack, much to Gasper's dismay. "Why didn't he take back? This horse takes back. I told him that!" the trainer screams at Steve Adika, who squirms in his plastic chair. "*Blame me!* I made a mistake with this kid!" Gasper continues to boom, witheringly. "I was an idiot to put this kid on this horse."

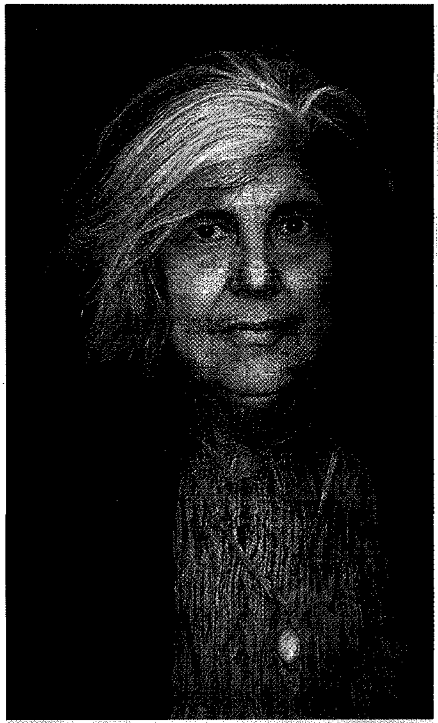
Steve Adika pleads his case. He's already bolted inside to watch the replay and bids Gasper to do the same. "The replay, Gas-*per*! Watch the replay—you will see, it is nothing like you think you have seen with your own eyes! There was no mistake—my rider made no mistake . . . Gas-*per*! If I am wrong, I will pay you the money from the bet myself!"

But Gasper is unrelenting; freezing rain pelting his forehead, he keeps his back turned, staring at the flock of seagulls squawking in the late-afternoon darkness at the track's near turn.

Later, told that Adika has said Mr. Buffum was "due to lose anyway," that former $35,000 claimers just don't win four in a row, and that furthermore, when the horse runs again, "Gasper will put Ariel right back on him," Moschera allows a half-smile to crease his well-practiced poker face.

"He's right, of course," Gasper says. "The kid's a natural. Look, it's a horse race. If I win 20 percent of the time, I'm a genius. But I'm not telling *him* that, not now." Then, buttoning up, the trainer shrugs and announces that "tomorrow is another day," one more racetrack cliché that is always true, except during winter racing, since, because of ice and snow, the next two days turn out to be canceled.

More than likely the cancellations are just fine for Mr. Loon, a fortyish man from Taipei, Taiwan, currently in the employ of a seafood restaurant on Main Street in Flushing. "Every day, I say, 'Today I will not come here,' but then I come," Mr. Loon says, tearing up tickets representing wagers he's made on Mr. Buffum and others. The shreds are caught in the thermals off Jamaica Bay and rise into the leaden sky. "Summer or winter, no different," Mr. Loon says. "Money just flies away." ■



Happening The volcano lover herself, Susan Sontag, comes to the 92nd Street Y on March 1 at 8 P.M. to read from and discuss her forthcoming book, *In America.* See "The Written Word" for details.

centuries through advertisements and packaging, mirrors and dressing tables. The New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St. (873-3400); $3–$5.

"Woody Allen's Television Days"—Through 3/21: A screening of Allen's television work on variety and late-night talk shows. The Museum o Television & Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. (621-6800) $3–$6.

Sports

Trailblazers and Torch Bearers—2/25 from 6:30 to P.M.: Olympic gold-medalist Diane Dixon (1984 leads a discussion at the Charles A. Dan Discovery Center (in Central Park, at 110t Street and Fifth Avenue) highlighting African-American achievements in track and field as wel as her own reflections on winning medals in tw Olympics. Call 860-1370 to register.

Online

New York Magazine on the Web—Click fro "Stephanie's Surf Report" (in the "Today" section of www.newyorkmag.com) to a ne Website each weekday. This week: Grab dail deals on designerwear; see the Keith Harin legacy live online; do the Fifth Avenue shoppin circuit with Fashion Planet; then chat an choose the right dining spot with help from th ladies behind the Globe's "She Said, She Said. And while you're in the neighborhood a www.nymag.com, stick around and check ou all our other great features, like selected article from the current issue, extensive archives, an an expanded "Cue" section, plus Web exclusive like daily event picks from Angie Maxim "First Words" for bibliophiles, our helpfu Subscriber Service Center, and a New Yor trivia contest.

Photograph by Walter Weissman/Globe Photo

kids

Purim...PlayStation...Purring

Children's Events

Electronic Olympics—Calling fanatic Sony PlayStation aficionados of all ages; you know who you are! **SONY WONDER TECHNOLOGY LAB** holds its second annual PlayStation "Masters Tournament," with players competing head-to-head in a variety of games on the 22-foot screen in the Sony Wonder High Definition Theater. Elimination Rounds are 2/23 from 3:30 to 5:30 and 2/24 from 3:30 to 5:30. Winners from those rounds compete 2/25 from 5:30 to 7:30 in the final playoffs, after which prizes will be awarded. 550 Madison Ave., at 56th St. (833-8100). Preregistered players pay $5 for each day of participation in the elimination rounds; walk-ins pay $6. Check-in is between 3:30 and 4:30. For further information and registration, call 833-7858. ●

Boysong—Such familiar songs as Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever" and Copland's "Simple Gifts" will be included in the American Boychoir's family concert at **CARNEGIE HALL**. Less familiar songs on the program include Larsen's "Reasons for Loving the Harmonica." Preconcert activities begin an hour beforehand: Charlotte Blake Alston will tell stories onstage, and in the Travelers Group Cafe and Rohatyn Room, members of the Boychoir will demonstrate vocal techniques with selections from the concert. 154 W. 57th St. (247-7800). 2/27 at 2. $5.

Purim Be-Ins—Kids will fashion their own noisemakers and show off their costumes in a musical parade at the **JEWISH MUSEUM**'s third annual Purim Pageant. 2/21 at 1. 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (423-3230). Admission is $8, $5.50 for students and seniors, free for children under 12. Uncle Moishy, "master of Jewish song and dance," plans to attend, as do Miss Pinky, "Queen of Goofiness," and stilt-walker the Great Robertini. The annual Family Purim Carnival at the **92ND STREET Y** is 2/28 from 11 to 2. Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. (996-1100). $20. *A Poppy Seed Purim,* written and directed by Sean Hartley and performed by the resident theater troupe at the **ELAINE KAUFMAN CULTURAL CENTER**, tells the story of Queen Esther and King Hamen with costumes, songs, and a happy ending. Audiences are encouraged to come in costume. 2/28 at 11. Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330). Tickets are $10; hamantaschen will be served following the performance.

Trailblazer—Legendary 1984 Olympic gold-medalist Diane Dixon speaks about her inspirational accomplishments. 2/25 from 6:30 to 8 at the **CHARLES A. DANA DISCOVERY CENTER**. Because of polio, Dixon, who teaches elementary school, could only walk with a brace for many years before becoming an athlete. 110th St. and Fifth Ave. in Central Park. The talk is free, but space is limited, and advance registration is required. ●●

Duking It Out—Wynton Marsalis and guest trombonists Britt Woodman and Art Baron (who played with Duke Ellington) join other jazz notables in a "Happy Birthday to Duke" Jazz for Young People concert that focuses on musical portraits. 2/27 at 11 and 1. Lincoln Center's **ALICE TULLY HALL**, 65th St. and Broadway (721-6500). $10 for those under 18, $15 for adults. (Donation tickets become available one hour before the concert at the door.)

"Together in the City"—Play in a clubhouse, ride on a computer-animated interactive subway, and learn some games your grandmother played at **THE BROOKLYN CHILDREN'S MUSEUM**'s spanking-new play-on exhibit celebrating this city's diversity and energy. This is the first exhibit during the museum's banner centennial year. 145 Brooklyn Ave., near the corner of St. Mark's Ave. (718-735-4400). Admission is by suggested donation of $3. ●●

Beep Beep—Paper Bag Players' uproarious *Hot Feet* looks at the city through a child's eyes. Hunter College's **SYLVIA AND DANNY KAYE PLAYHOUSE**, 68th St. and Park Ave. (772-4448). Weekends at 2 through 3/7; $15 and $20.

Cheap Dates—From the National Symphony at Carnegie Hall to the Shanghai Circus at the New Victory Theater, tickets to many of the city's cultural riches cost only $5 to students in junior and senior high school when purchased through **HIGH 5**. Call HI-5-TKTS; e-mail info@high5tix.org.; or visit the Website at www.high5tix.org.

How Wool Is Pulled—Shrink down to the size of one of the Borrowers in "Special Effects 2," an inventive new exhibit at the **NEW YORK HALL OF SCIENCE** that will be instructive and entertaining for all ages. Manipulate rotoscope cels from *Tron* and models from *Terminator 2,* watch industry experts demonstrate their craft on video, or simply marvel at the actual AT-AT Snowalker from *The Empire Strikes Back* and the foam-latex masks several *Star Trek* aliens wore. 47-01 111th St., Flushing, Queens (718-699-0005). Museum admission is $6, $4 for children and seniors; free Thurs. and Fri. from 2 to 5; there's an additional $2 admission fee to "Special Effects 2."

The Cat Came Back—To make the fifteenth annual International Cat Show at **MADISON SQUARE GARDEN** a wee bit more accessible for those of us who find hairless and short-tailed breeds hard to love, walk-in contests have been added for "amateur" house pets. Another crowd pleaser is the Iams Supercat Contest, in which shelter-adopted or personally rescued cats are judged. Check out the Cat Supermarket for kitty videos, cat sculptures, cyber cat laser toys, and designer cat beds for felines that have everything. 2/27 from 10 to 6 and 2/28 from 10 to 5. For further information, call 465-6741. Admission is $15.50 on Saturday, $16.50 on Sunday; seniors and children under 12 are $10.50 on Saturday, $12.50 on Sunday. (The show benefits the Humane Society of New York.) ●

Movie Magnetism—Regular family programs at the **MUSEUM OF MODERN ART**, which tend to be about making or looking at art, manage to sneak in movies that seem to pique everyone's interest. Among the films offered this week are *Mr. Bug Goes to Town,* a cartoon about insects that inhabit a patch of land in our very own Manhattan; *On the Go! Movement and Art;* and *Take a Trip: Automobiles, Trains and More.* 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9400). For further information about family programs at the museum, call 708-9805.

Shake Rattle and Roll—Bonga (a.k.a. Gaston Jean-Baptiste) leads a free workshop in drum- and shaker-making for kids ages 6 and up, which culminates in a spirited performance. 2/28 from 1 to 2:30. **CHARLES A. DANA DISCOVERY CENTER**, 110th St. and Fifth Ave. in Central Park (860-1370). Registration is required. ●●

On View

Cookie Monster

Human members of the Muppet family have collaborated on more than two dozen quilts over the years, to mark births and other auspicious events in their own lives. So to mark the thirtieth anniversary of 'Sesame Street,' the people behind the puppets pieced together a witty three-dimensional friendship quilt to accompany "Art From the Fuzzy and Famous," a show of art inspired by the television series at the Museum of Television & Radio, through March 11; $6 suggested contribution for adults, $3 for children.

Photograph by John E. Barrett, courtesy of the Children's Television Workshop.

cue

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Movies

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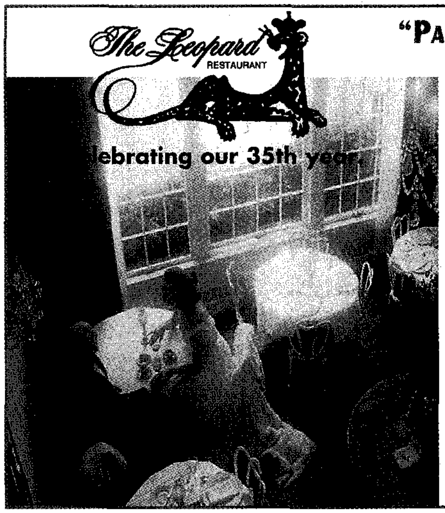

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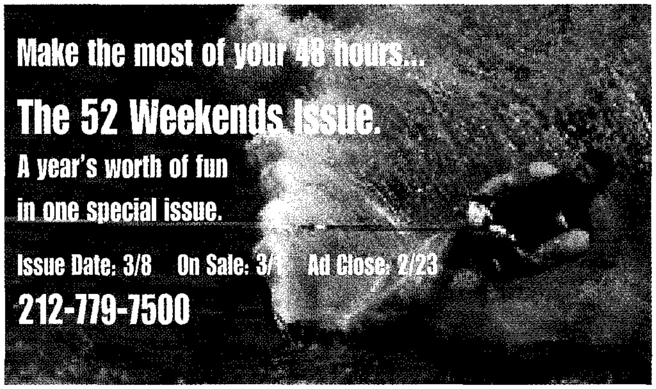
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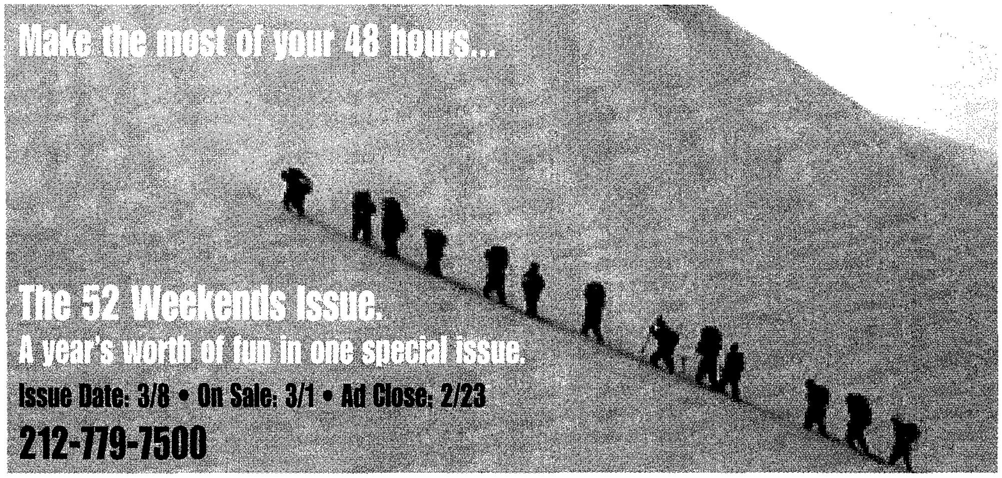
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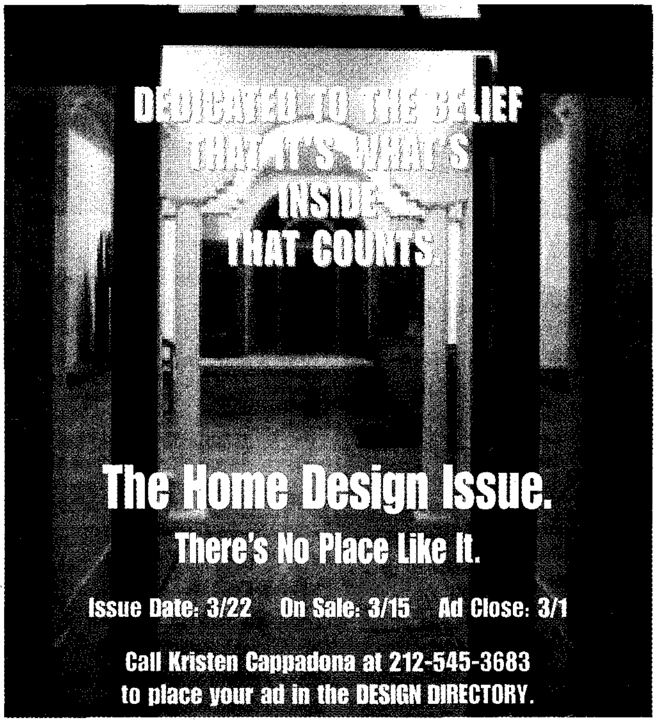
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Clark Seeks Lois—A caring, handsome, prominent surgeon with rock-solid values, razor-sharp, clear mind/heart of gold, multifaceted, 5'10", lean, 43, seeks refined, kind woman under 37, for glowing, sparkling romance, family. Phone/photo necessary. No Kryptonite! 7233✉☎

Loving Life, Work And Fun—Elitist (meritist), good looking, athletic, mid 50s, divorced MD (Harvard), in great shape (5'8", 150 lbs), looking for a happy, successful, bright, sexy, athletic, 30s-early 40s woman who likes herself and knows what she wants. Share (for real): cuddling, giggling, meandering Manhattan, Tanglewood, Tuscany, Provence, the Mets, NY Times, scuba, black (maybe white?) diamonds, tennis, blading, great food and wine, but most of all truly share, spoil and love each other. Smoke signals, carrier pigeons a plus - letters/photos/phone okay. 7207 ✉ ☎

Very Handsome, Successful—Entrepreneur, 33, 6'2", 185 lbs, athletic, quasi-intellectual, adventurous, slightly offbeat, seeks a pretty, free-spirited woman with a good heart and a great passion for life. 7172 ✉ ☎

Warm, Vibrant, Gutsy—Entrepreneurial woman with million-dollar smile (casual and elegant blond, green-eyed and slender), seeks equally smart, successful, sexy man (50-65) who can make her laugh. Shared interests in food and wine, film, music, country and city pleasures, international travel important. Photo optional, but ability to relax, generosity of heart and spirit a must. 7217 ✉

I'm A 33-Year-Old—Beautiful, vibrant, enthusiastic, athletic, successful Jewish woman seeking a guy who is Jewish, 30-41 years old, down-to-earth, fun, ambitious and positive, who loves sports, reading, music and traveling. Let's stroll through life - you, me and my chocolate lab. Note and photo required. 7223 ✉

Seeking High-Maintenance Female—Companion for world travel, by early-retirement entrepreneur. You only pass this way one time - why not do it in style? Age to 35. Intelligence and sense of humor required. Please send information regarding age, height, weight, plus photo and note too. 7176 ✉

Exotic Beauty—*Young, attractive, slim* and successful upper East Side female seeks generous, successful CEO type, 40-plus man with a zest for life, for passionate rendezvous that knows no boundaries. 7210 ✉ ☎

41, Single Jewish Professional Male—Financially secure, from NJ, looking to meet single Jewish professional female, birth sign Pisces or Capricorn, nonsmoker, no kids, for dating. Photo appreciated. 7190 ✉ ☎

Petite, Prosperous Princess Wanted—By very accomplished and athletic European prince in 50s. 7205 ✉☎

Very Successful Jewish Male—Doctor, 40, attractive, athletic, seeks female, 27-37, for a possible relationship. Race unimportant. Photo a must. 7203 ✉

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Fabulous At 50—Pretty, slim professional seeks secure, worldly, special man for friendship, fun and romance. 7199 ✉☎

Pretty Woman, Teacher—White, sincere, loyal, sense of humor, seeks a good man for the long run, 60 plus. Photo. 7187 ✉

Beautiful Woman—Enjoys working out, dining out, travel. Seeks man, 35-50, for romance and possibly more. Kids okay. Handwritten note/photo, please. 7236✉☎

Manhattanite—(I'm likable) seeks woman, 50-60, for travels in Greek Isles, April. Photo a must. 7237 ✉

Successful, Athletic—White professional male, mid 50s, seeks accomplished, petite Asian lady under 57. 7183 ✉ ☎

Very Attractive, Smart, Caring—And secure 50ish female looking for male counterpart to share joys of life and love. Someone who combines intellect with integrity, who loves life and believes growing older is best when shared with someone special in a monogamous relationship. Photo/note appreciated. 7206✉

Everything But You—Very handsome, intelligent, outgoing, fit, LI, single Jewish male professional, 42 - enjoys everything from romantic dinners and Broadway to a casual night at the movies, set of tennis/golf, Sunday brunch...and just sharing fun times together. Seeks pretty, slim, caring, single Jewish female, 32-38, nonsmoker... now and forever. Note/photo. 7231 ✉

Romantic, Sexy Italian—38, dark hair, seeks sexy lady to love. Photo. 7186 ✉

Petite, Fun-Loving, Athletic—Professional woman, 36, into simple living, seeks nonsmoking, fit man with integrity, 30-50, who loves the outdoors, dogs and getting silly. Jersey preferred. 7170✉☎

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Rare Bird—Suffolk widower, Jewish, 5'11", healthy, handsome, 60ish, slim, unpretentious, humorous - likes classical music, movies, CNN. Financially secure. For long-term relationship with cultured female, nonsmoker, 54-64. Photo. 7215✉

Beguiling Redhead—Published novelist/professor, former dancer, fit, cosmopolitan, quirky mind, good-hearted, passionate about arts, letters, France; love outdoors, biking in Burgundy, also indoor mischief; want consequential connection with man of substance, 55-65, NY area. 7193✉

Former Sex Counselor—Seeks educated Jewish man in 70s with sense of humor and desire to travel. Note. 7202✉

Warm, Sincere Businessman—Mid 50s, divorced, Jewish, seeks professional woman, 40 plus, to enjoy NYC, tennis, the beach and country. Note/photo. 7219✉

Single Dad, Doctor—40, good-looking, funny, upbeat, seeks pretty, fit white/Asian, single/divorced female, late 20s to early 40s. Recent photo. 7224✉☎

Successful Romantic Man—34, wants to meet a woman in 30s, who enjoys theater, eating out in Manhattan, for long-term relationship. Photo, please. 7182✉

Looking For The One—28, Jewish professional, dark brown hair and eyes, 5'11", athletic build. I have everything I need in life except for - my soul mate! I am very picky though. My likes are crimson tresses styled at Fekkai, a pearl complexion and vegetarian a plus. Slim figure with long legs and a good dancer are big turn-ons. She should have a love for travel, be passionate about life, a good speller, have a good sense of risibility and enjoy evenings of poetry reading. One last thing: please respond only if your name starts with an M. 7211✉

A Jug Of Wine, A Loaf Of Bread—And thou. Thou is a female with great smile, style, warmth and sex appeal, 35-47, Asian or white. Yours is a romantic attorney, tall, lean, athletic, 47, with dashing good looks and warm personality. Kids okay. Photo/note. 7232✉

Attractive, Athletic, Child Psychologist—With background in art and dance, enjoys biking, skiing and other physically engagng activities. Seeks professional male, 35-48, who is creative, playful, good-hearted, with sense of humor. Note/photo. 7218✉

Young, Beautiful, Shapely—Fair maiden, 5'7", 120 lbs, blond hair, blue eyes, in south FL, seeks charming knight n shining armor to share enchanting ravel adventures. Ideal suitors must be 40-60, well-educated, athletic, spontaneous and passionate. 7184✉

Truth In Advertising—Jewish, 43, 6'1", eal estate developer, considered very good-looking, romantic, communicative, and some what cerebral, enjoys skiing, New England, cooking in, dining out, the Sunday Times, and hopefully you. Seeking an elegant yet unpretentious woman for all easons. Photo/phone. 7239✉

European Woman—36, 5'7", college nstructor with a passion for Mozart, Springsteen, poetry and flowers, mom of 0-year-old son, seeks gentle, well-read/raveled, humorous man, 36-55. 7197✉

Classy, Waspy Businesswoman, 50—Very attractive. Enjoys country and ity life. Interests are tennis, golf, walking, skiing, travel, gourmet cooking. 5'8" tall, 125 lbs. Seeking to meet aring and communicative man. 7171✉

Chelsea Lady—5'10", slim, blond, 40ish, somewhat sweet trial lawyer seeks big-hearted guy, professionally able, sharp eyes, warm nose, physical and together. Must laugh easily and hug well. 7181✉☎

Not For The Timid—This uncommonly honest, perceptive, divorced, Jewish, good-looking man who is highly reliable, with cultivated interests, keen wit and big heart, desires counterpart: a very smart, confident, upbeat, trim, 40ish, adventuresome woman of charm, warmth, sensuality. Though accomplished, you can laugh at yourself. Though savvy, you reach for the whimsical. You give family, friendship and loyalty high priority. Brief note/recent photo a must. 7178✉

Daddy Warbucks And Handsome Andy—Gay white guy, 54, healthy, 5'8", 150 lbs, friendly, kind and generous. Successful career/into film, theater, travel, music and adventure. Looking to meet younger man (30-45), Manhattan, who is smart, fun-loving and with a career, and is looking to date and possible long-term relationship. Photo and letter please. 7204✉

Attractive, Exuberant Female—Professional, European background, mid 30s, slim and athletic, seeks white Christian male who enjoys sport, art and good company. Note/photo, please. 7192✉

Style/Substance—Pretty, petite LI woman seeks fit gentleman, 47-58, intelligent, sincere, professional. 7229✉☎

Attractive, Cultured, Secure—Retired professional woman with abundant joie de vivre seeks personable, compatible companion in his 60s. 7238✉

Elegant Redhead, Sweet And Shapely—Seeks a Jewish, 65-plus, loving, financially secure gentleman to share and enjoy quality life together. 7213✉☎

First-Time Offer—Beautiful inside and out, Jewish, 30something female, 5'7", fit, sophisticated professional seeks above-average bachelor, 30-40, who has personality plus, style, class and a terrific sense of humor, for dining, theater, movies and enjoying all that NYC has to offer. Limited time only. Photo a must. 7194✉

Happy, Pretty CT Professional—Jewish, 45, terrific grown-up kids, ready to live again and looking for co-conspirator with similar life. 7180✉

Vivacious, Bi-Continental (Paris/NY)—Funny, accomplished, older (hard to believe) woman, financially and spiritually independent, seeks bright, darling man to help make the trip into a journey. 7198✉☎

You Not Tarzan - Me Not Jane—But we can have fun in the jungle anyway. Very pretty, Rubenesque professional, late 30s, athletic, nonreligious, seeks emotionally mature man, 34-45, who is 5'10" plus and has a quick wit, open mind, kind heart and soft touch. Please call to hear more. Note/photo; will exchange. 7234✉☎

Seeking Happily-Ever-After—Successful Wall Street professional, Italian-Irish, 47, 6', down-to-earth romantic who loves to travel and have fun. Loves dining out as well as dining in. Seeks attractive female for laughter and commitment. Note/photo. 7208✉☎

40 And Fun—Happy-go-lucky lady, 5'2", well-proportioned, seeking a man, 37-50, for fun, laughter and adventure. Note/photo. 7241✉

Tall, Slender, Sexy—Vital, verbal, active and attractive female seeks white male, 60-65. 7225✉☎

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Someday I'll Know That Moment—Divine, when all the things you are... pretty, intelligent, petite, warm, understanding, adventurous, fun, sensual, 30-40 (me: handsome, fit, sincere, secure, active, 39, 5'6", 145 lbs, Italian)...are mine! Note/phone/photo. 7235✉

Man Of Character—43, 6', 190. Ivy, Wall St, quick to laugh, international traveler, loves staying fit, fine dining, live music. Good kisser. Seeks very attractive, slim woman, to 38 who is in great shape and has a good attitude. Note/photo/phone. 7243✉

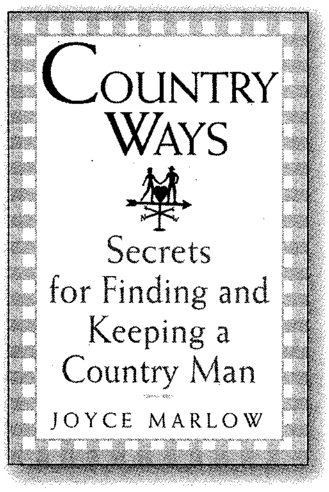
Believer In Destiny—Still waits; I, widow, tall, dark, slim, poetic, intense, funny, outspoken photographer, jogger, Israeli background, mom of adorable 3 1/2-year-old. You, 50-60, unafraid of passion, broad of mind and shoulder, tall, with hair, integrity, humor, whom life has really touched and still believes. Photo, please, with letter. 7189✉

Very Handsome, Successful—Jewish (nonreligous) professional male, athletic, sensitive, with great sense of humor, looking for very pretty, thin, intelligent, honest, sincere, fun-loving, in-touch woman. Life was meant to share. If you are looking for love, marriage and children, and are under 40, and a nonsmoker, send recent photo and note. 7212✉☎

Pretty And Slim—Ivy-educated, Jewish, 37, witty, charming, with many interests. Seeks quick-witted, very smart, fit man, 35-43, for love and marriage. Note/photo, please. 7195✉

Stunning, Slim, Athletic Brunette—38, 5'7", seeks tall, professional, athletic male whose interests may include skiing, cycling, cultural activities, etc. 7175✉☎

Nice Jewish Girl With A Twist—Smart, funny, pretty, sane, kids' TV producer, 34, seeks bright, witty mensch, 30 to mid 40s, with an edge to match my twist. Note/photo/phone. 7177✉☎



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Scoop Me Up!—Pretty, slim Jewish gal, upbeat and worldly, seeks a tallish, good-looking, fit, accomplished, nonsmoking male, 48-55, who's cultured and playful, for delicious romance. Photo. 7191 ✉☎

Young MD—30-year-old surgeon, 6', 175 lbs, dark hair/eyes, handsome (once modeled). Seeking exceptionally beautiful woman (21-29), slim, intelligent, down-to-earth, with class and style. Please send photo/note. 7216 ✉

Wealthy Wall Street Executive—Jewish, 40, tall, fit and sexy, seeks woman of quality to share love, life and family. Photo. 7228 ✉☎

Handsome, Successful, Athletic—TV executive, 37, Jewish, seeks adventurous, smart, exotic and beautiful woman to share travel, theater and romance. Photo and note a must. 7188✉

Handsome, Successful, Athletic—TV executive, 37, Jewish, seeks adventurous, smart, exotic and beautiful woman to share travel, theater and romance. Photo and note a must. 7188✉

Bright, Blond, Beautiful—35, seeks gentleman who has terrific taste and wears great shoes. Must be articulate, fit and a Democrat. Photo. 7173 ✉

Older Man Desired—Charming, sexy, classy, long-legged European, blond/green, 25, 5'7" (East 60s), looking to meet sophisticated, educated gentleman for mutually rewarding relationship, world travel and fun times together. 7200 ✉

Generous, Single—Handsome corporate exec seeks very attractive lady, 21-39. Should be feminine in appearance and dress. Reply with photo/phone. 7209 ✉☎

Warm, Attractive—Professional woman, intelligent, cultured, good humor, seeks compatible man. Late 50's-60's. 7247 ✉

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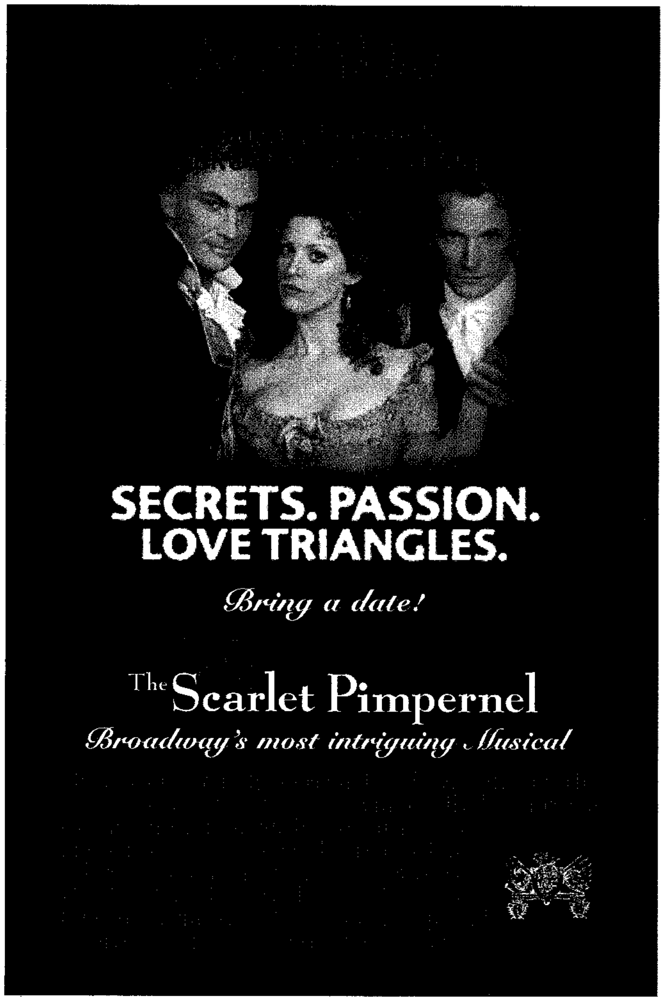
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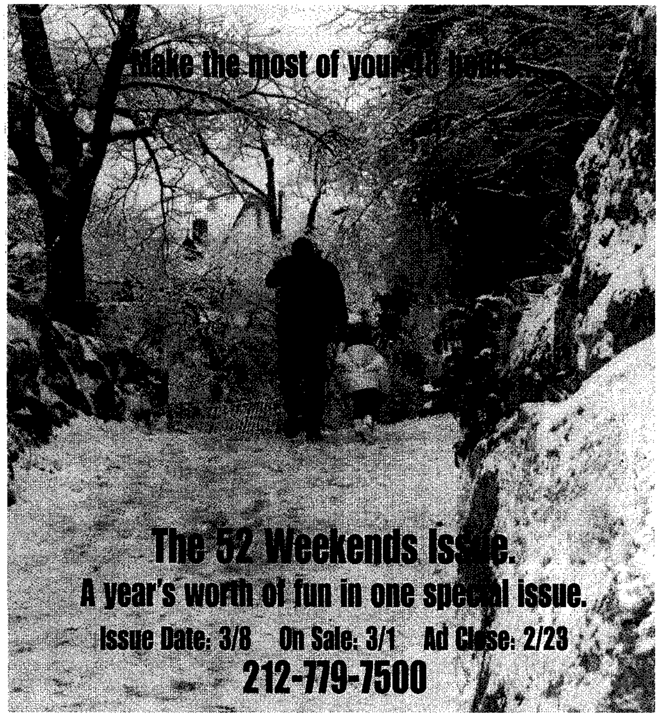
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2 AGE GROUPS! UPSCALE SINGLES
600+ Expected • DJ • Canapes • $20
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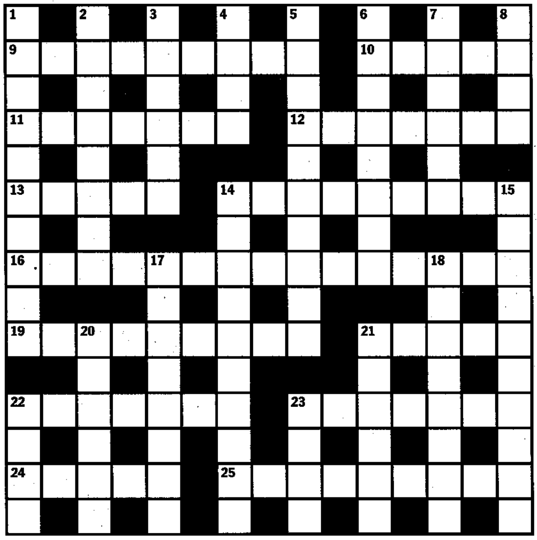
The 'Guardian' Crossword

ACROSS
9 Among other things a rust blighted this country. (9)
10 Some gardeners shield Erica with a flowering tree. (5)
11 The cause of a dry Spring? (7)
12 Ringing like a parrot in a cave? (7)
13 Group of workers in cutback! (5)
14 Subsequent page. (9)
16 The end of education. (9,6)
19 One who puts up with paste. (9)
21 Gather some grain fertiliser. (5)
22 Wicked Cain sat uneasily. (7)
23 Bird fitting in place. (7)
24 Taking candy. (5)
25 Edge towards the end of tennis game. (9)

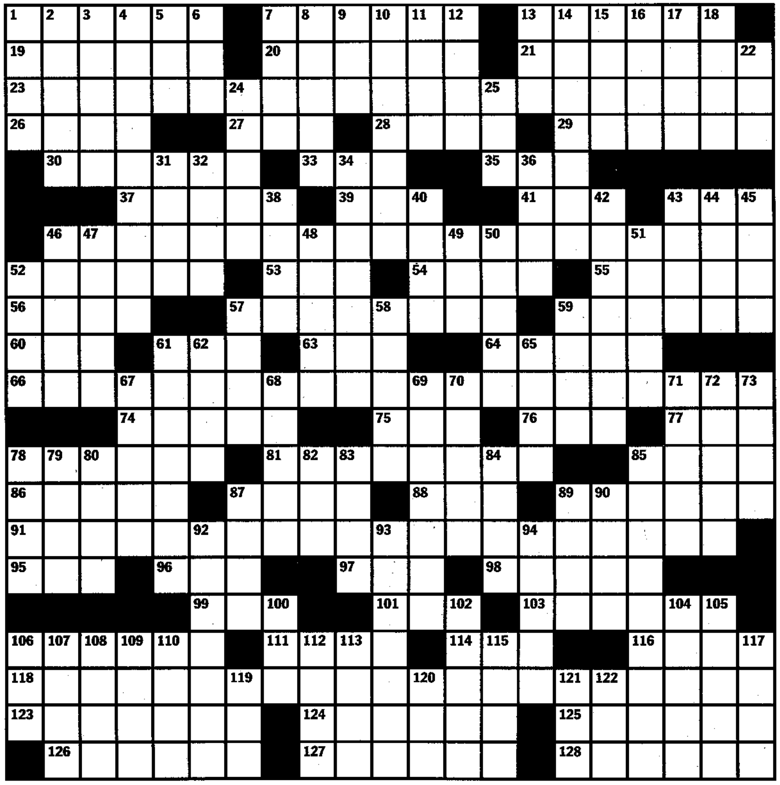


DOWN
1 Worker struck, and so was accompanied to the station. (10)
2 A European schoolboy pocketing shilling. (8)
3 It follows George on register of local names. (6)
4 Empty apartment. (4)
5 Ferocious journalist? (5,5)
6 He gets car to start after machine breakdown. (8)
7 Girl who wed in a mix-up. (6)
8 Annoyance caused by men in frocks. (4)
14 Versatile artist (ARCO), one of the best. (10)
15 They provide room for cleaners to tidy up. (10)
17 Might the successful go from this to this? (8)
18 One in post bearing stamp of approval. (8)
20 Censorship? (6)
21 In the main insular. (6)
22 Band of material used in dressing window. (4)
23 Pennsylvania Ave. without a flag! (4)

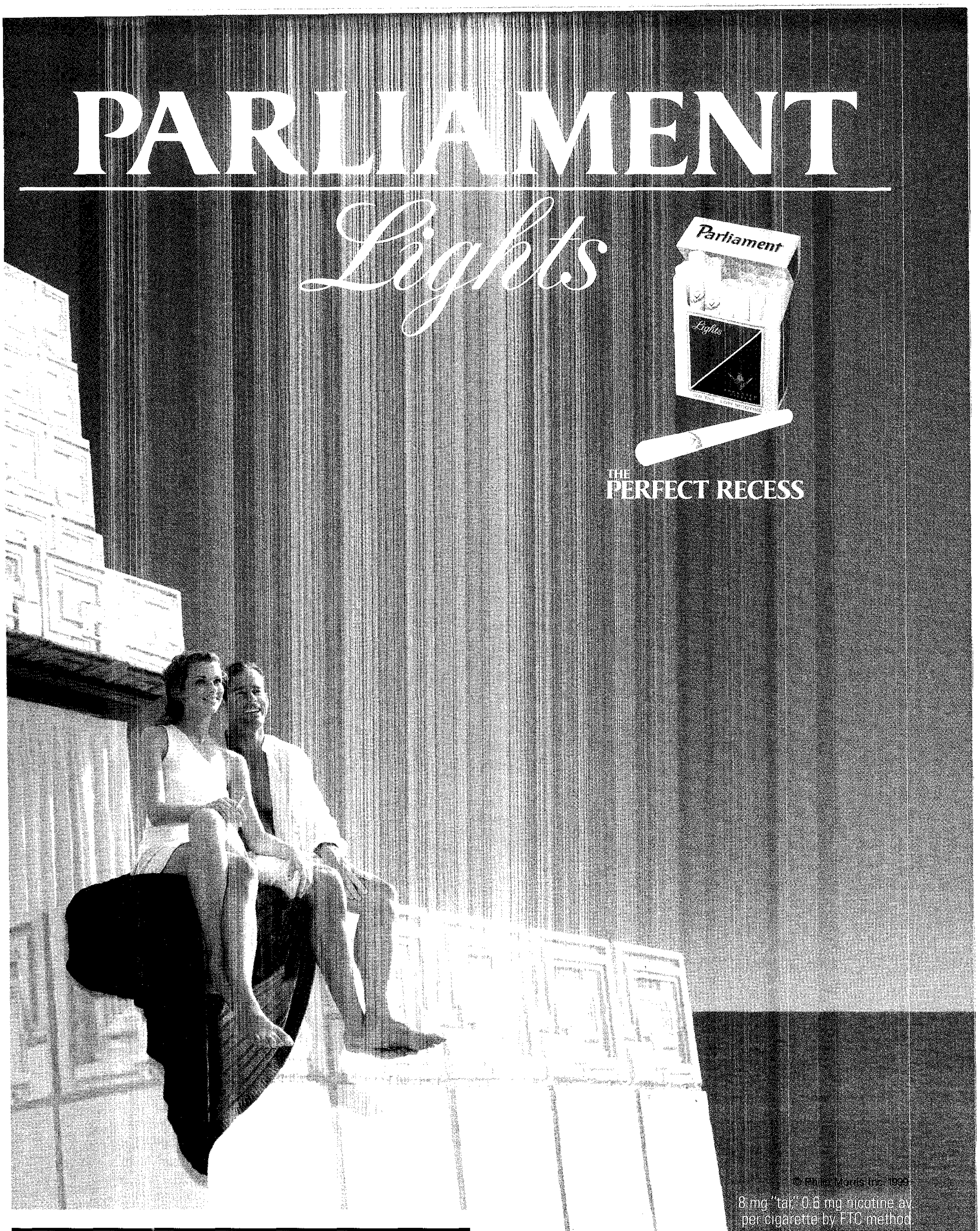
'Sub-Headlines': 'Cue' Crossword • By Maura B. Jacobson

ACROSS
1 Tea type
7 Rabin's co-Nobelist
13 Overseas
19 —— time (singly)
20 Big shots
21 Baltimore birds
23 POLICE DISCOVER WHEAT GERMS
26 Swiss abstract painter
27 Where to "tie a yellow ribbon," with 117-Down
28 French I infinitive
29 Tantalizing puzzle
30 Nearly
33 Drink through a straw
35 Lampshade finial
37 Key in, as data
39 Missing link
41 Cuba or Aruba: abbr.
43 Corn core
46 CHIMNEY MISHAP ON CHRISTMAS EVE
52 Hyatt rival
53 Windy City, familiarly
54 Cafeteria tote
55 Speakeasy offering
56 Son of Seth
57 Creator of a preliminary drawing
59 Chutney fruits
60 Campaigned
61 Between fa and la
63 Prefix with lithic
64 Overturn
66 PLEA MADE TO WEAR SHORT SLEEVES
74 Bay window
75 Dr. of rap
76 Singer Janis ——
77 Old Olds
78 Demented one
81 Teams of champions
85 Sawyer's pal
86 I.e., spelled out
87 Hi or 'bye, to Luigi
88 Like some humor
89 Wall candleholder
91 METAMORPHOSIS DUE TO THROAT TROUBLE
95 Shrieking sound
96 Neither sml. nor lge.
97 Start of a Tolstoy title
98 Newman-Redford scam
99 Hamilton bill
101 Boxer's winning stat.
103 Silky wool
106 As quiet as ——
111 Zip, for one
114 Edible drumstick
116 Portable shelter
118 SINGERS IMMERSED IN CAKE MIX
123 Italian surrender city of WW II
124 Henry Fielding heroine
125 Timeless: poetic
126 Most irritated
127 Pitcher of the only perfect World Series game
128 Signify

DOWN
1 Pawn, slangily
2 Name on the A-bomber
3 Opposite of attract
4 Store's bargain areas
5 Contraband-monitoring agcy.
6 End of Chou's name
7 Forever —— day
8 Towel bars
9 Nancy Hanks's boy
10 Fido's front foot
11 Facilitate a felony
12 Pre-Lenin ruler
13 Astronaut's "fine"
14 Part of B.T.U.
15 Rub the wrong way
16 Alley Oop's love
17 Milwaukee products
18 "—— Mable," 1918 best-seller
22 Russ. state, formerly
24 Famous
25 Jackie's sister
31 Undeceived by
32 Oliver's comedy cohort
34 Fire-starting device
36 Compassion
38 Partner of roll
40 The heart of the matter
42 Neighbor of Syria
43 Plumbing woe
44 Greek liqueur
45 Buzzy bunch
46 Mideast peninsula
47 In company (with)
48 "—— Man Loves a Woman," (1994 film)
49 Third numero
50 ——scarum
51 Melted-cheese-and-wine dish
52 Frau's spouse
57 Kind of gin fizz
58 Sorority gals
59 Western flattop
61 Horizontal division, as of earth
62 Of the ear
65 Penultimate Greek letters
67 Raise aloft
68 "The Exorcist" actress
69 Illustrator's forte
70 Equip with new weaponry
71 Smiles broadly
72 Therefore
73 Voice inflection
78 Odometer unit
79 "Zip——Doo-Dah"
80 Most of a giraffe
82 Chem. workroom
83 Movie magnate Marcus
84 Pumpernickels' kin
85 No longer remembered
87 Give over
89 Tibia
90 Viet ——
92 Does a verifying examination
93 Banquet supplier
94 Theatrical
100 Sgt., e.g.
102 Song of yesteryear
104 Braking rocket
105 With regard to
106 Channel 7, in N.Y.
107 Goat conversation
108 —— buco
109 Pusher's buyer
110 Overly dry
112 White House Office
113 "La Plume —— Tante"
115 Abba of Israel
117 See 27-Across
119 Chelsea's Socks
120 Overhead RR's
121 Sofa, converted
122 Wolfed down



Solutions to last week's puzzles appear on page 13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